

THE AMERICAN Legion

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OUR WAR

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GRAIGNES: A D-DAY STORY

The erosion of the nation-state

FOR GOD AND COUNTRY SINCE 1919



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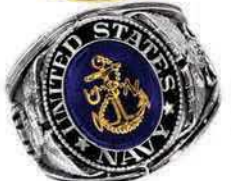
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OLD GLORY'S GO-TO GUY

Joseph Piazza of Holbrook Legion Post 615 in New Caney, Texas, is an expert on U.S. flag etiquette for youth and county officials in his hometown of Cleveland, instructing students on how to display and fold the flag and encouraging local businesses to replace banners that are worn and faded. "A lot of men have died to protect the American flag," Piazza says. "Our flag represents a living country. Therefore, it is a living object."

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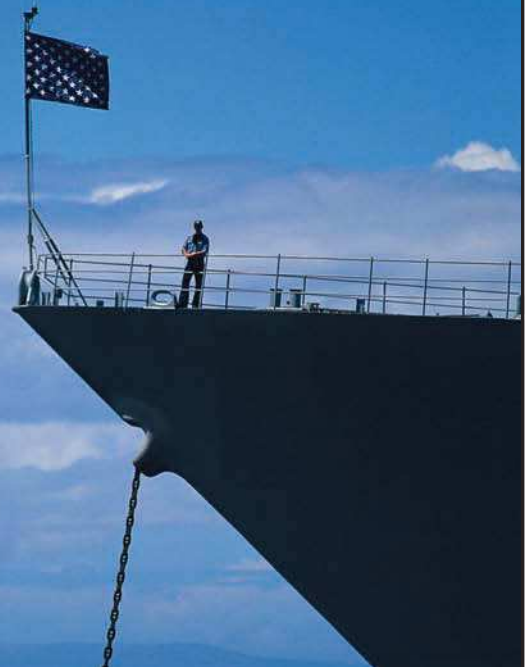


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Indianapolis, IN 46207
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Company, Inc.
NEW YORK (212) 588-9200
DETROIT (248) 530-0300
CHICAGO (312) 236-4900
LOS ANGELES (213) 624-0900

Copyright 2013 by The American Legion

The American Legion (ISSN 0886-1234) is published monthly by The American Legion, 5745 Lee Road, Indianapolis, IN 46216. Periodicals postage paid at Indianapolis, IN 46204 and additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The American Legion, Data Services, P.O. Box 1954, Indianapolis, IN 46206.
Canada Post International Publications Mail (Canadian Distribution) Sales Agreement No. PM40063731. Return Undeliverable Canadian Addresses to: Station A, P.O. Box, Windsor ON N9A 6J5.
Re-entered second-class mail matter at Manila Central Post Office dated Dec. 22, 1991.



Printed in USA
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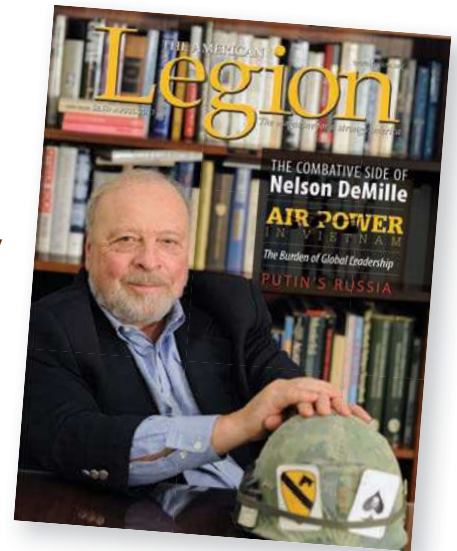
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'The Vietnam War in Nelson DeMille'

I read this article with interest. DeMille certainly shed new light on the war, having experienced it firsthand. The war left a black mark on U.S. history, especially the way our servicemembers were treated after it. I lost a 19-year-old cousin in the jungles of Vietnam. My husband was in the Navy during the war, although he served stateside.

I read the humor in the article, which is so Nelson DeMille (it shows in all his books). We went to the same junior and senior high school – he was a nice young man then, and having recently seen him at our class reunion and at a book signing, I can say he is that same nice person. Thank you, Nelson, for sharing your wartime experience with the rest of the nation. I am so glad it led to your career as a wonderful writer.

– Nancy Sisson, North Babylon, N.Y.

**'The Air War in Vietnam'**

The article about air power in Vietnam (April) was interesting and long overdue, yet the listing of aircraft failed to mention the AC-47, or "Spooky." Yes, it was built on a C-47 platform, but it was distinctly different from the configuration used for other missions. And what about the AC-119 Shadow, flown by the Indiana Air National Guard in country before Air Force crews got up to speed on it?

Speaking of crews, not all were officers. There were many enlisted folk aboard. Some were rated air crew, others were non-crew. Yet the newest rated crew got Air Medals while non-crews never got a thing, all in the same airplane taking the same fire. Enlisted men kept planes flying with the superb logistics and maintenance missions they performed, and the intelligence they generated, and the skills and courage they brought to flight-line jobs and to the bunker line on the base perimeter (and beyond).

– Rick Fulton, Pittsburg, Kan.

This was a good article, but Ken Olsen left out a few aircraft that did a lot of good for the ground troops pinned down by enemy fire: the AC-47, AC-119 and AC-130. Ask any grunt who got help from "Spooky" what he thinks and feels.

– Joe Scalora, Bergenfield, N.J.

I enjoyed reading this article, but there was no mention of the Marine CH-34 or CH-46. While serving in a Marine artillery unit, I spent a lot of time in these helicopters moving from landing zone to landing zone. Give credit where it's due. We still fly some of these today.

– Dale Punch, Lincoln, N.C.

Editor's note: *The American Legion Magazine* received a barrage of letters in response to this article – 49 separate designations, in nearly 100 letters, were cited as being missing from our list. No aircraft was intentionally omitted. The article described "a few of the standouts."

Tougher gun-control laws

I read with interest the statements supporting and opposing new gun-control laws (Big Issues, April). Rep. Carolyn McCarthy is the proverbial ostrich with her head stuck in the sand. To think that gun-control laws will inhibit violence in any manner is just ridiculous. I do agree that all the rhetoric is not helpful, but throwing out executive orders and circumventing Americans' legal rights isn't, either. Criminals won't have background checks because they won't be buying guns from registered dealers.

— Gary Meek, Clayton, N.C.

After reading Rep. Carolyn McCarthy's statement, I signed up three new members for the NRA. Touché.

— Ron Reiss, Harpersfield, N.Y.

The NRA should read all of the Second Amendment: "A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed." In 1791, a militia may have been – according to Webster's New World Dictionary – "any army composed of citizens rather than professional soldiers called up in time of emergency." The people were to have guns so they could form a militia to defend a free state; there may not have been enough troops to defend it. Can the NRA understand that? In 1791, there were no rapid-fire weapons with large magazines. Is the Second Amendment still relevant today?

— James F. Jackson, Carlisle, Ind.

At the risk of offending a lot of our loving mothers, I am not an advocate of gun control, and I will tell you why. I served honorably with the 1st Marine Division during the Korean War, so I am no stranger to violence and death. As long as the world remains a dangerous place to live, I reserve the right to protect myself and those around me, much as I did on the front lines.

— Dave George, Auburn Hills, Mich.

Rep. Carolyn McCarthy offered some thoughtful compromises to serious issues, while Rep. Steve Stockman offered political diatribes and tired catchphrases out of the NRA playbook.

— L.J. Faulkner, Green Oaks, Ill.

"Illegal" means illegal

Thank you for publishing Rep. John Conyers' statement about use of the term "illegal immigrant" (Rapid Fire, April). I now understand more clearly why our once great country is disintegrating. Citizens of other nations immigrating to our country via established legal processes are right; those who sneak over the border in defiance of our laws are wrong. I'd expect a group of first-graders to miss this distinction. But it bothers me that an elected official feels righteous in euphemizing, and rationalizing, the actions of criminals – especially when he sits in Congress, the very group responsible for the laws of the land. Using his logic, maybe escaped convicts are simply "out-of-incarceration" Americans, and we should stop trying to recapture them.

— Harry Cole, Phoenix

'Russian Rollback'

While visiting Moscow, I asked my young Russian guide what she thought of Putin. Her response? "I like him. He makes things work." I also inquired about the Allied landing at Normandy, which opened a second front in World War II. Her response? "Oh, we would have won anyway."

In those answers, I sense a strong nationalism – Russia against the world – and the need for a strong leader at the expense of liberties and legal protection.

— Tom Flinn, Murphy, N.C.

'The Lonely Path'

In answer to the dilemma Alan W. Dowd describes our presidents as having with our foreign policy (April), I am 87 and have lived through these times, and my response is simply this: Stop mingling in other countries' affairs, stay home and take care of our own problems.

— Walt Anzinger, Babbitt, Minn.

Alan W. Dowd states that "one (president) didn't even have a college degree." I thought I was fairly knowledgeable about the presidents from FDR to Obama, particularly since I served under more than a few of them. Which one didn't have a college degree?

— Earl B. Cadle, Sedalia, Mo.

Editor's note: Harry Truman was turned down by the U.S. Military Academy at West Point because of poor eyesight. He attended business and law school, but financial problems prevented him from completing either.

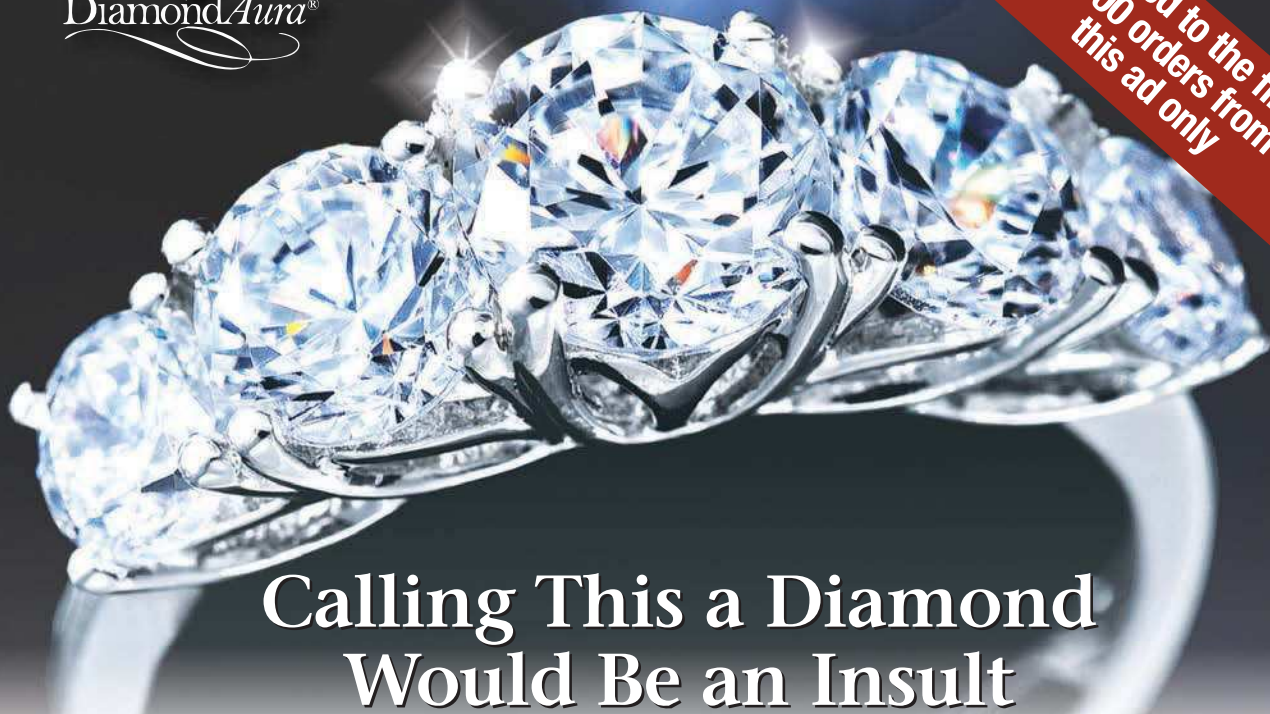
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Regarding the colors of our nation

Garland W. Powell, a former World War I aviator who went on to serve as director of The American Legion's Americanism Division, arranged an unusual conference in Washington June 14-15, 1923. Invited were representatives of 68 different associations from across the land, ranging from the League of Professional Pen Women to the Grand Army of the Republic to the American Federation of Labor. Military, commercial, fraternal and educational organizations were all included.

They came with a purpose: to produce one definitive set of rules – a code – for the proper display, handling and respect of the U.S. flag.

President Warren G. Harding delivered opening remarks, noting that America's highest elected official would rarely address a group so small as the one assembled before him. But, Harding explained, he felt the purpose of the conference was worthy of presidential encouragement before work began. Regardless of their associations, many attendees were veterans, and President Harding recognized that, too.

"I can understand how the flag owes considerably more to the serviceman of the republic than it does to the ordinary citizen, but I can't understand why the soldier or the sailor or the ex-serviceman in national defense owes any more to the flag than everybody else in the United States of America, and so everything we do to bring the flag into proper consideration of the republic ... deserves to be cordially commended."

Over the next two days, the American Legion-led conference established what would become the U.S. Flag Code. Prior to that, standards for flag etiquette, treatment and display were inconsistent at best. "The flag ruffles beautifully or makes a splendid-looking rosette," said Capt. George M. Chandler, who reported on the U.S. Army's rules for civilian flag display. "Again, let us use our common sense. The flag is the emblem of our country, the mother of us all. Few of us would think it dignified ... to crush our mother's picture into a rosette or gather it up into a festoon."

For the next 19 years, The American Legion led a national campaign to distribute the flag rules. Schools adopted them. Local government activities were guided by them, as were parades and sporting events. Finally, in 1942, Congress passed the U.S. Flag Code, and the rules became law. By then, The American Legion had successfully led the effort to weave respect for our colors into the fabric of our nation.

Today, another American Legion-led coalition, the Citizens Flag Alliance, represents about 140 associations that seek passage of a constitutional amendment that would give Congress "power to prohibit the physical desecration of the flag of the United States." A 1989 Supreme Court decision ruled that U.S. flag desecration is protected under the First Amendment. Polls have shown that nearly 80 percent of the American public disagrees with the ruling. House Joint Resolution 19, introduced in January, once again reminds our elected lawmakers that those of us who swore with our lives to protect the freedoms symbolized by our flag will continue to ask for this one sacred exception, an amendment, even if it takes Congress time to catch up with the wishes of the republic, as was the case in passing the U.S. Flag Code.



National Commander
James E. Koutz

MEMORANDA

FLAG ALERT E-NEWSLETTER

Do you ever wonder why the U.S. flag is flying at half-staff or want to read the proclamation behind it? Sign up for The American Legion Flag Alert e-newsletter, which is sent whenever the president makes such a proclamation. To sign up and join nearly 30,000 other subscribers, visit www.legion.org/newsletters online.

ASK THE FLAG EXPERT

American Legion Americanism Division flag experts are happy to answer questions online about U.S. flag treatment, display and respect. To ask a question or read questions and answers, visit www.legion.org/flag online.

PAUSE FOR THE PLEDGE

On Flag Day, June 14, all Americans are encouraged to stop what they are doing at 7 p.m. Eastern time to recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

James E. "Jim" Koutz

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LOWRY A. FINLEY-JACKSON

BRANCH OF SERVICE: Army

YEARS: 1981-2002

MOS: Retention NCO

RANK AT DISCHARGE: Master sergeant

DECORATIONS

- Meritorious Service Medal (3)
- Army Commendation Medal (7)
- Army Achievement Medal (8)
- Good Conduct Medal (7)
- National Defense Medal

AMERICAN LEGION POST

St. Louis Service Women's Post 404

NUMBER OF YEARS IN THE LEGION: 7

OFFICES

- Post commander (2010-2012)
- Post vice commander (2008-2010)
- District executive vice commander (2012)
- District vice commander (2011)
- Department assistant adjutant (2012-present)
- Department assistant sergeant-at-arms
- National assistant sergeant-at-arms (2012)
- Post color and honor guards
- National American Legion College (2010)
- Department women veterans coordinator (2012)
- District Flag Day coordinator (2011)
- Gold Brigade recruiting award (2011)
- 100th Anniversary Observance Committee member (2011-present)

Watch an interview with Lowry Finley-Jackson online:

 www.legion.org/magazine



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Universal background checks



SUPPORT

Rep. Matt Cartwright, D-Pa.

■ Cartwright is a member of the House Gun Violence Prevention Task Force.

Along with the rest of the country, I was heartbroken over the shootings of 26 innocent adults and children in Newtown, Conn., last December. In the wake of the tragedy, I came across some horrifying statistics. Each year, nearly 100,000 Americans are shot, of which 32,000 die. Forty-seven children are shot every day, of which eight die.

I have a deep reverence for the Constitution and respect the right of citizens to bear arms. With that in mind, I believe that a crucial and noncontroversial way to reduce gun violence without impinging on our Second Amendment rights is to expand background checks to anyone purchasing a firearm. This will help ensure that weapons are kept out of the hands of felons, terrorists and mentally unstable people.

Currently, 40 percent of firearm purchases originate from private sellers – online, at gun shows or nonlicensed federal firearm dealers – who don't require a background check on buyers. This means that a terrorist can purchase an automatic rifle online with immunity. A convicted felon can buy a rifle from a private seller without undergoing a background check or being entered in the National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS). An individual suffering from suicidal depression can buy a handgun at a gun show – even as he or she may struggle to access mental health services. We can change this.

A poll released by Republican pollster Frank Luntz in July 2012 revealed that 74 percent of National Rifle Association members and 87 percent of gun owners support a criminal background check for anyone purchasing a firearm. The vast majority of the public agrees that we must close loopholes that allow dangerous individuals unbridled access to weapons.



OPPOSE

Sen. Chuck Grassley, R-Iowa

■ Grassley is the ranking Republican on the Senate Judiciary Committee.

The pictures we see of the Newtown, Conn., children or shooting victims in Colorado and Arizona are heartbreaking. We all want sensible actions that could reduce the likelihood of future gun crimes. But placing new restrictions on our constitutional right to bear arms won't solve the problem.

The Second Amendment is more than just words on paper. It's a fundamental right that ensures citizens the ability to protect themselves and their families.

Universal background checks are a step toward infringing the Second Amendment rights of law-abiding Americans. That's a non-starter for me and many of my colleagues in Congress.

According to an official with the National Institute of Justice, universal background checks can be enforced only if there is gun registration. Once the federal government starts registering guns, we're on a slippery slope.

Justice Department research shows that most criminals obtain guns through theft or straw purchases. They already avoid existing background-check requirements, so why believe they will comply with expanded checks?

The proposed bill would also create a new federal felony specifically for law-abiding citizens who fail to report that their guns have been lost or stolen. Few crimes punish inaction. There are practical and constitutional issues surrounding creation of such a crime.

Last but not least, hundreds of thousands of mental health and felony records that are supposed to be submitted to the National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS) are never submitted. Let's fix the existing system before we say that it needs to be expanded.

THE HEART OF THE ISSUE

Gun-control advocates want universal background checks on all gun sales.

Supporters of gun rights say they oppose new background checks while existing laws are not enforced.

CONTACT YOUR ELECTED OFFICIALS

The Honorable (name), U.S. Senate, Washington, DC 20510 • Phone: (202) 224-3121

The Honorable (name), U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, DC 20515 • Phone: (202) 225-3121

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UNDER YOUR SKIN

Rashes, patches, growths and color changes could signal more serious health problems.

BY JUDITH S. HURLEY

There's more to skin than meets the eye. While many lumps, bumps, rashes and wrinkles are problems with the skin alone, some changes reflect serious underlying health problems.

"Certain skin changes can be early signs of a disease, or they appear after a disease has already caused internal damage," says Dr. Cindy Owen, a board-certified dermatologist and assistant professor of dermatology at the University of Louisville. Although the hundreds of different skin changes associated with diseases could fill a textbook, it's worth familiarizing yourself with a handful of the more common or serious ones.

Rashes especially deserve scrutiny. It's recently been discovered that a rash on the top of the feet or lower legs that doesn't respond to treatment with a steroid or antifungal ointment is a rare sign of hepatitis C. A sunburn-like, butterfly-shaped rash across the cheeks and nose is a telltale sign of lupus, a chronic disorder of the immune system. Another rash of special concern is DRESS (Drug Reaction or Rash with Eosinophilia and Systemic Symptoms) syndrome.

"The rash looks like a common drug-reaction rash that itches and goes away, but DRESS is actually a much more serious, potentially fatal reaction," Owen says. "There may be facial swelling and enlarged lymph nodes. The liver, heart, lungs and thyroid gland can be affected."

Anti-seizure and antibiotic medications are the most common offenders. A person may not experience the reaction for up to three months after starting the drug, which makes it tricky to diagnose. Any rash accompanied by a fever, swelling of the face or lymph nodes, muscle aches or a feeling of illness warrants a prompt call to the doctor.

Darkened, velvety patches on the back of the neck or within folds of skin can be a sign of pre-diabetes.

Called acanthosis nigricans, this condition is most often seen in overweight individuals – including children and teens – and is linked to unhealthy changes in how the body handles insulin.

"Primary care physicians usually pick up on this skin sign and test the patient for diabetes," Owen says. Other changes in skin texture, such as unusual softening or hardening, can occur with connective-tissue disorders and certain cancers.

Alterations in skin color may also signal a serious illness. A bronze discoloration can be caused by iron buildup in organs, a condition called hereditary hemochromatosis.

Yellowing of the skin, or jaundice,

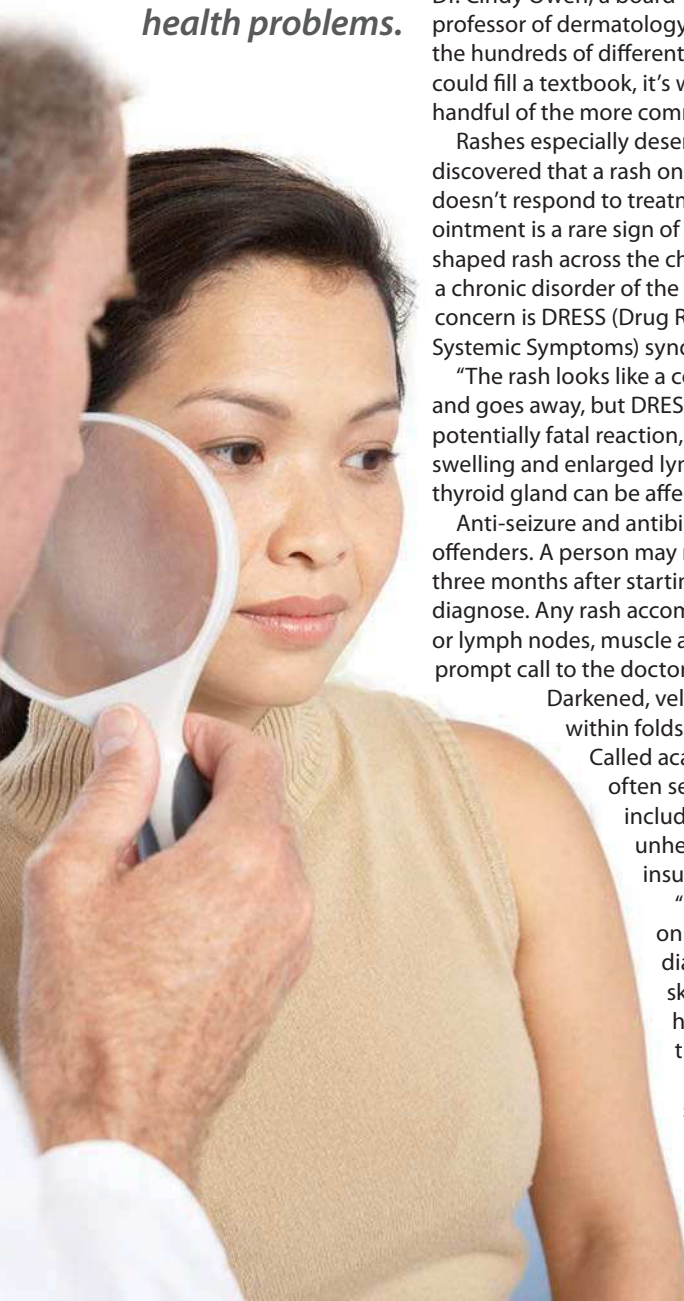
Which dermatologist?

Dermatologists are medical doctors who specialize in skin care and skin disease as well as the health of nails and hair. Many dermatologists have a specific area of focus:

Cosmetic dermatologists and cosmetic surgeons treat skin and skin conditions with the goal of improving appearance.

Pediatric dermatologists focus on skin conditions of newborns, children and adolescents, including hereditary skin problems and skin conditions in children with medical problems.

Medical dermatologists focus on the prevention, identification and treatment of skin disease. Some specialize in the care of patients with skin cancer, complex medical conditions, or immune system diseases such as lupus.



Media Bakery

See **SKIN** on page 17

Living Well is designed to provide general information. It is not intended to be, nor is it, medical advice. Readers should consult their physicians when they have health problems.



***I'm breathing better,
so now, I can be part of the picture.***

COPD? Ask your doctor about breathing better with ADVAIR.*

ADVAIR helps improve your lung function so you breathe better. **Results may vary.** Unlike most chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) medications, ADVAIR contains both an anti-inflammatory[†] and a long-acting bronchodilator working together to help improve your lung function. ADVAIR DISKUS 250/50 is approved for adults with COPD, including chronic bronchitis, emphysema, or both. ADVAIR DISKUS is not for, and should not be used to treat, sudden, severe symptoms of COPD. ADVAIR won't replace a rescue inhaler. You should only take 1 inhalation of ADVAIR twice a day. Higher doses will not provide additional benefits. Ask your doctor about ADVAIR.

Important Safety Information about ADVAIR DISKUS 250/50

- Do not use ADVAIR to treat sudden, severe symptoms of asthma or COPD. Always have a rescue inhaler medicine with you to treat sudden symptoms.
- Do not use ADVAIR DISKUS if you have severe allergy to milk proteins. Ask your doctor if you are not sure.
- **Do not use ADVAIR more often than prescribed. Do not take ADVAIR with other medicines that contain long-acting beta₂-agonists for any reason.** Tell your doctor about medicines you take and about all of your medical conditions.
- **ADVAIR DISKUS can cause serious side effects, including:**
 - **serious allergic reactions.** Call your healthcare provider or get emergency medical care if you get any of the following symptoms of a serious allergic reaction: rash; hives; swelling of the face, mouth, and tongue; breathing problems.
 - **sudden breathing problems immediately after inhaling your medicine.**
 - **effects on heart:** increased blood pressure; a fast and irregular heartbeat; chest pain.
 - **effects on nervous system:** tremor; nervousness.
 - **reduced adrenal function (may result in loss of energy).**
 - **changes in blood (sugar, potassium, certain types of white blood cells).**
 - **weakened immune system and a higher chance of infections.** You should avoid exposure to chickenpox and measles, and, if exposed, consult your healthcare provider without delay. Worsening of existing tuberculosis, fungal, bacterial, viral, or parasitic infections, or ocular herpes simplex may occur.



ADVAIR DISKUS[®] 250/50
(fluticasone propionate 250 mcg and salmeterol 50 mcg inhalation powder)

- **lower bone mineral density.** This may be a problem for people who already have a higher chance of low bone density (osteoporosis).
- **eye problems including glaucoma and cataracts.** You should have regular eye exams while using ADVAIR.
- **pneumonia.** People with COPD have a higher chance of getting pneumonia. ADVAIR may increase the chance of getting pneumonia. Call your doctor if you notice any of the following symptoms: increase in mucus (sputum) production; change in mucus color; fever; chills; increased cough; increased breathing problems.
- **Common side effects of ADVAIR DISKUS 250/50 for COPD include:** thrush in the mouth and throat, throat irritation, hoarseness and voice changes, viral respiratory infections, headache, muscle and bone pain.

*Measured by a breathing test in people taking ADVAIR DISKUS 250/50, compared with people taking either fluticasone propionate 250 mcg or salmeterol 50 mcg. Your results may vary.

†It is not known how anti-inflammatories work in COPD.

‡Restrictions apply. See ADVAIRCOPD.com for eligibility rules.

Please see Brief Summary of Important Safety Information about ADVAIR DISKUS on adjacent page.

You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit www.fda.gov/medwatch, or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

To get your first full prescription free and to save on refills,[‡] visit ADVAIRCOPD.com or call 1-877-200-4673.

GSK
for you

If you don't have prescription coverage and can't afford your medicines, visit GSKforYou.com or call 1-866-GSK-FOR-U (1-866-475-3678)

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ADVAIR DISKUS®

(fluticasone propionate and salmeterol inhalation powder)

BRIEF
SUMMARY

This summary does not take the place of talking to your healthcare provider about your medical condition or treatment. See full Prescribing Information for complete product information.

What is the most important information I should know about ADVAIR DISKUS?

ADVAIR DISKUS can cause serious side effects, including:

1. People with asthma who take long-acting beta₂-adrenergic agonist (LABA) medicines, such as salmeterol (one of the medicines in ADVAIR DISKUS), have an increased risk of death from asthma problems. It is not known whether fluticasone propionate, the other medicine in ADVAIR DISKUS, reduces the risk of death from asthma problems seen with salmeterol.
- Call your healthcare provider if breathing problems worsen over time while using ADVAIR DISKUS. You may need different treatment.
- Get emergency medical care if:
 - breathing problems worsen quickly and
 - you use your rescue inhaler medicine, but it does not relieve your breathing problems.
2. ADVAIR DISKUS should be used only if your healthcare provider decides that your asthma is not well controlled with a long-term asthma control medicine, such as inhaled corticosteroids.
3. When your asthma is well controlled, your healthcare provider may tell you to stop taking ADVAIR DISKUS. Your healthcare provider will decide if you can stop ADVAIR DISKUS without loss of asthma control. Your healthcare provider may prescribe a different asthma control medicine for you, such as an inhaled corticosteroid.
4. Children and adolescents who take LABA medicines may have an increased risk of being hospitalized for asthma problems.

What is ADVAIR DISKUS?

- ADVAIR DISKUS combines an inhaled corticosteroid medicine, fluticasone propionate (the same medicine found in FLOVENT®), and a LABA medicine, salmeterol (the same medicine found in SEREVENT®).
- Inhaled corticosteroids help to decrease inflammation in the lungs. Inflammation in the lungs can lead to asthma symptoms.
- LABA medicines are used in people with asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). LABA medicines help the muscles around the airways in your lungs stay relaxed to prevent symptoms, such as wheezing and shortness of breath. These symptoms can happen when the muscles around the airways tighten. This makes it hard to breathe. In severe cases, wheezing can stop your breathing and cause death if not treated right away.
- ADVAIR DISKUS is used for asthma and COPD as follows:

Asthma

ADVAIR DISKUS is used to control symptoms of asthma and to prevent symptoms such as wheezing in adults and children aged 4 years and older.

ADVAIR DISKUS contains salmeterol (the same medicine found in SEREVENT). LABA medicines, such as salmeterol, increase the risk of death from asthma problems.

ADVAIR DISKUS is not for adults and children with asthma who are well controlled with an asthma control medicine, such as a low to medium dose of an inhaled corticosteroid medicine.

COPD

COPD is a chronic lung disease that includes chronic bronchitis, emphysema, or both. ADVAIR DISKUS 250/50 is used long term, 2 times each day to help improve lung function for better breathing in adults with COPD. ADVAIR DISKUS 250/50 has been shown to decrease the number of flare-ups and worsening of COPD symptoms (exacerbations).

Who should not use ADVAIR DISKUS?

Do not use ADVAIR DISKUS:

- to treat sudden, severe symptoms of asthma or COPD.

- if you have a severe allergy to milk proteins. Ask your doctor if you are not sure.

What should I tell my healthcare provider before using ADVAIR DISKUS?

Tell your healthcare provider about all of your health conditions, including if you:

- have heart problems
- have high blood pressure
- have seizures
- have thyroid problems
- have diabetes
- have liver problems
- have osteoporosis
- have an immune system problem
- are pregnant or planning to become pregnant. It is not known if ADVAIR DISKUS may harm your unborn baby.
- are breastfeeding. It is not known if ADVAIR DISKUS passes into your milk and if it can harm your baby.
- are allergic to any of the ingredients in ADVAIR DISKUS, any other medicines, or food products
- are exposed to chickenpox or measles

Tell your healthcare provider about all the medicines you take including prescription and non-prescription medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements. ADVAIR DISKUS and certain other medicines may interact with each other. This may cause serious side effects. Especially, tell your healthcare provider if you take ritonavir. The anti-HIV medicines NORVIR® (ritonavir capsules) Soft Gelatin, NORVIR (ritonavir oral solution), and KALETRA® (lopinavir/ritonavir) Tablets contain ritonavir.

Know the medicines you take. Keep a list and show it to your healthcare provider and pharmacist each time you get a new medicine.

How do I use ADVAIR DISKUS?

Do not use ADVAIR DISKUS unless your healthcare provider has taught you and you understand everything. Ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist if you have any questions.

- Children should use ADVAIR DISKUS with an adult's help, as instructed by the child's healthcare provider.
- Use ADVAIR DISKUS exactly as prescribed. **Do not use ADVAIR DISKUS more often than prescribed.** ADVAIR DISKUS comes in 3 strengths. Your healthcare provider has prescribed the one that is best for your condition.
- The usual dosage of ADVAIR DISKUS is 1 inhalation 2 times each day (morning and evening). The 2 doses should be about 12 hours apart. Rinse your mouth with water after using ADVAIR DISKUS.
- If you take more ADVAIR DISKUS than your doctor has prescribed, get medical help right away if you have any unusual symptoms, such as worsening shortness of breath, chest pain, increased heart rate, or shakiness.
- If you miss a dose of ADVAIR DISKUS, just skip that dose. Take your next dose at your usual time. Do not take 2 doses at one time.
- Do not use a spacer device with ADVAIR DISKUS.
- Do not breathe into ADVAIR DISKUS.
- **While you are using ADVAIR DISKUS 2 times each day, do not use other medicines that contain a LABA for any reason.** Ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist if any of your other medicines are LABA medicines.
- Do not stop using ADVAIR DISKUS or other asthma medicines unless told to do so by your healthcare provider because your symptoms might get worse. Your healthcare provider will change your medicines as needed.
- ADVAIR DISKUS does not relieve sudden symptoms. Always have a rescue inhaler medicine with you to treat sudden symptoms. If you do not have an inhaled, short-acting bronchodilator, call your healthcare provider to have one prescribed for you.

Call your healthcare provider or get medical care right away if:

- your breathing problems worsen with ADVAIR DISKUS
- you need to use your rescue inhaler medicine more often than usual
- your rescue inhaler medicine does not work as well for you at relieving symptoms
- you need to use 4 or more inhalations of your rescue inhaler medicine for 2 or more days in a row

- you use 1 whole canister of your rescue inhaler medicine in 8 weeks' time
- your peak flow meter results decrease. Your healthcare provider will tell you the numbers that are right for you.
- you have asthma and your symptoms do not improve after using ADVAIR DISKUS regularly for 1 week

What are the possible side effects with ADVAIR DISKUS?

- ADVAIR DISKUS can cause serious side effects, including:
- See "What is the most important information I should know about ADVAIR DISKUS?"
- **serious allergic reactions.** Call your healthcare provider or get emergency medical care if you get any of the following symptoms of a serious allergic reaction:
 - rash
 - hives
 - swelling of the face, mouth, and tongue
 - breathing problems
- **sudden breathing problems immediately after inhaling your medicine**
- **effects on heart**
 - increased blood pressure
 - a fast and irregular heartbeat
 - chest pain
- **effects on nervous system**
 - tremor
 - nervousness
- **reduced adrenal function (may result in loss of energy)**
- **changes in blood (sugar, potassium, certain types of white blood cells)**
- **weakened immune system and a higher chance of infections**
- **lower bone mineral density.** This may be a problem for people who already have a higher chance of low bone density (osteoporosis).
- **eye problems including glaucoma and cataracts.** You should have regular eye exams while using ADVAIR DISKUS.
- **slowed growth in children.** A child's growth should be checked often.
- **pneumonia.** People with COPD have a higher chance of getting pneumonia. ADVAIR DISKUS may increase the chance of getting pneumonia. Call your healthcare provider if you notice any of the following symptoms:
 - increase in mucus (sputum) production
 - change in mucus color
 - fever
 - chills
 - increased cough
 - increased breathing problems

Common side effects of ADVAIR DISKUS include:

Asthma:

- upper respiratory tract infection
- throat irritation
- hoarseness and voice changes
- thrush in the mouth and throat
- bronchitis
- cough
- headache
- nausea and vomiting

COPD:

- thrush in the mouth and throat
- throat irritation
- hoarseness and voice changes
- viral respiratory infections
- headache
- muscle and bone pain

In children with asthma, infections in the ear, nose, and throat are common.

Tell your healthcare provider about any side effect that bothers you or that does not go away.

These are not all the side effects with ADVAIR DISKUS. Ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist for more information. Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to the FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088.

Ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist for additional information about ADVAIR DISKUS. You can also contact the company that makes ADVAIR DISKUS (toll free) at 1-888-825-5249 or at www.advaair.com.



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SKIN *continued from page 14*

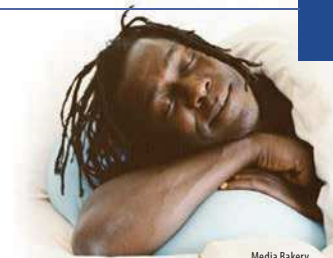
occurs with liver disease. Addison's disease, an adrenal disorder, leads to darkening of the skin, especially in skin folds, the creases of palms and feet, and areas with sun exposure.

Skin growths also deserve attention. Small yellow, waxy bumps called eruptive xanthomas sometimes appear on the arms, legs or torsos of people with high triglycerides or poorly managed diabetes. Proper diagnosis

and treatment are a must to lower the risk for heart disease.

Although skin cancer is the most common form of cancer, nearly a third of adults are unaware that it can be easily treated if caught early, according to the American Academy of Dermatology. Skin cancer may show up as a change in the size, shape or color of a mole; as a smooth, shiny lump or a bump with a crusted, scaly surface; as a flat red or pale area; or as a rough patch or sore that doesn't heal. If you have a new growth or unusual skin change, see your primary care physician, Owen advises. If the condition doesn't respond to treatment, see a dermatologist who specializes in medical dermatology.

Judith S. Hurley is a freelance writer specializing in health and medicine.



Media Bakery

You snooze, you lose?

A new study by University of Colorado researchers suggests a link between a lack of sleep and weight gain.

Although the researchers found that staying up late and getting just five hours of sleep increased a person's metabolism and helped night owls burn an extra 11 calories per day, the night owls ate far more than those who slept nine hours, and by the end of the first week they had gained an average of about two pounds, *The New York Times* reports.

This may be related to the kinds of foods sleep-deprived people tend to eat (more carbohydrates) and their eating habits (smaller breakfasts and more snacking after dinner).

Overall, people consumed 6 percent more calories when they failed to get enough sleep, according to the *Times*.

WHAT YOUR KNEES NEED

For some injuries, therapy may be as effective as surgery.

A new study conducted by researchers at Brigham and Women's Hospital (BWH) in Boston concludes that for certain kinds of knee injuries – including meniscus tears and knee osteoarthritis – physical therapy is often as effective as surgery in improving range of motion and reducing pain.

BWH researchers randomly assigned patients suffering the same meniscal conditions to be treated with either arthroscopic surgery or a physical therapy regimen. Assessed six and 12 months later, both groups showed "substantial and similar improvements" in movement, HealthDay reported.

"Our research shows that there is no single 'best' treatment," said Dr. Jeffrey Katz, the study's principal investigator.

"Patients who wish to avoid surgery can be reassured that physical therapy is a reasonable option, although they should recognize that not everyone will improve with physical therapy alone. In this study, one-third of patients who received physical therapy ultimately chose to have surgery," he added.

Each year, U.S. doctors perform more than 450,000 arthroscopic surgeries to treat meniscal tears.



Media Bakery

Health insurance, by the numbers

48.2 million
Americans younger than 65 without insurance in 2011

18.2 Percent of Americans younger than 65 without insurance

61.2 Percent of Americans younger than 65 with private insurance

53.3
Percent of children with private insurance

41
Percent of children with public health plan coverage

7
Percent of children without insurance

Source: Early release of selected estimates based on data from 2011 National Health Interview Survey, www.cdc.gov/nchs/nhis

VA seen as short on results, not funding

BY TOM PHILPOTT

Republicans and Democrats on the House and Senate Veterans Affairs committees are cheering the size of the Obama administration's fiscal 2014 budget request of \$152.7 billion for the Department of Veterans Affairs. But they want VA to spend those dollars more effectively by setting clear benchmarks for reaching lofty goals – such as eliminating the claims backlog by 2015 – and producing more frequent and reliable progress reports.

Lawmakers from both parties complain that VA projections – particularly for ending the claims backlog, boosting the accuracy rate to 98 percent and creating a joint electronic health-record system with DoD – have been mere aspirations, and that interim milestones are frequently changed or left intentionally opaque.

The number of dollars committed isn't the problem. While much of the federal budget is being squeezed by sequestration, VA's budget for next fiscal year would pop by 10.3 percent if Congress approves the request.

Mandatory spending to cover the rising number of compensation payments, GI Bill payments and other entitlements would soar by 15.3 percent to \$86.1 billion. The administration seeks a 4.3-percent increase, to \$66.5 billion, in the discretionary portion of VA's next budget to pay for staffing, hospital construction and facility maintenance.

Robust funding is a priority, said Rep. Jeff Miller, R-Fla., chairman of the House committee. "On the other hand," he continued, "I'm concerned that we're not seeing the results for all the money Congress has provided VA over the years."

With the budget request last year, VA said that by 2013 "no more than 40 percent of compensation and pension claims" would be in backlog – more than 125 days old. "We're now at over 70 percent of claims being older than 125 days," Miller said. "The same is true for prior budget requests: lofty promises, excitement about new initiatives and technologies, but no results ... VA has missed its own performance goals every single year."

Sen. Bernie Sanders, I-Vt., Miller's counterpart in the Senate, asked VA Secretary Eric Shinseki at a mid-April hearing why Congress should believe that the planned transition from paper to electronic claims and other reform initiatives will achieve what VA projects, given missed targets of the past.

Shinseki conceded that the goals he set are ambitious. By April, almost 600,000 undecided claims were still more than 125 days old. He blamed VA's failure to meet promised interim targets in part on the "unfinished business" of claims filed by Vietnam veterans who became eligible for compensation in 2010 with VA's decision to list ischemic heart disease, Parkinson's disease and B-cell leukemia among the conditions presumed caused by exposure to Agent Orange.

VA has also acknowledged nine new ailments as compensable for Gulf War veterans and expanded PTSD eligibility across generations of veterans. In making these

decisions, Shinseki said, he knew they would "grow the (claims) inventory and complicate the backlog. And we testified to that when those decisions were made."

VA's new electronic claims processing tool, the Veterans Benefits Management System, had been installed in 30 of 56 regional offices by April. It will be operating department-wide by January, Shinseki said.

Sen. Richard Burr, R-N.C., said that Congress has good reason to stay skeptical, given past rosy projections tied to untested technology. VA's new budget request shows that "incoming claims will continue to exceed output during this year and next year, which means the number of pending claims will continue to grow," he said. "In fact, VA now projects it will have an inventory of 960,000 claims at the end of 2014 – about 100,000 more than are pending today."

Tom Philpott has written about veterans and military personnel issues for more than 30 years.



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'How did we get such good men?'

The American infantry in Vietnam

BY DAVID W. TAYLOR





I spent over a decade documenting the experiences of my infantry battalion in the Vietnam War. Known as “the Professionals,” the men of the 5th/46th Infantry Battalion of the 198th Light Infantry Brigade, Americal (23rd) Infantry Division, fought from 1968 to 1971 in three of the four types of terrains encountered in the war: the mountains, the piedmont and the coastal plains of South Vietnam (excluding the Mekong Delta, which was occupied by one division during the war because of the huge logistical burden to sustain it there). What I learned is that our experiences are a microcosm of the U.S. infantry’s broader role in the Vietnam War.

While every soldier in Vietnam was important, as a general rule, approximately 10 troops supported every infantry soldier (Army or Marine) in the field. At the peak of the war in 1969, approximately 540,000 personnel were in country, but only 40,000 to 60,000 were in the field seeking to do battle with the enemy. In Vietnam, more than 70 percent of all casualties were suffered by the infantry maneuver battalions. In fact, casualty rates among the infantry divisions were two and a half times higher than those suffered in World War II.

Vietnam, for the infantry, was unlike any other war. Infantrymen saw heavy combat in the “battles of the big battalions” from 1965 to 1969. Then, for many battalions, it became a small-unit leader’s war in which, by 1970, squad-sized and platoon-sized patrols were the norm. And the diversity of the terrain into which the infantry could be rapidly inserted by helicopter presented a new kind of challenge.

The Annamite Range ran the length of South Vietnam from the demilitarized zone (DMZ) bordering North Vietnam to within 80 kilometers of Saigon. The mountains have high peaks – some more than 8,000 feet – that straddle the country’s borders with Laos and Cambodia. The terrain is as thick as it is high. Double- and triple-canopy jungle made movement difficult and dangerous. The unforgiving mountains were home to tigers,

clouded leopards, various types of venomous snakes and the well-camouflaged lairs of the North Vietnamese Army (NVA).

East of the Annamite Range lay the piedmont, characterized by low-lying hills and small valleys, which are interspersed with tall elephant grass and thick stands of wooded areas. These in turn are interspersed with open fields dotted by small rice paddies. The piedmont was the transition point for the enemy. The heavy vegetation offered a fast avenue of approach from the mountains that allowed the NVA and main-force Viet Cong units to quickly assemble troop strength and munitions to attack populated areas, American units or the South Vietnamese Army. Most often, these attacks were to interrupt pacification efforts of the Vietnamese people.

“I was the pointman for five months. Night movements were the ones I feared the most. But I knew the guys were alert and had my back. My hope was that all the guys would return home safely. We were all proud to serve America, but we heard very little of the progress of the broader war. We only knew the progress we were making, and our daily trials and successes.” *Charles Barbo, sergeant, 5th/46th Infantry*

East of the piedmont lay the coastal lowlands, which make up much of the area containing the Vietnamese population centers and the major rice paddies. The fertile paddies on the coast are nourished by silt from mountain runoff, a product of the eastern watershed of the Annamite Range. The lowlands offer broad plains of paddies interrupted by numerous hedgerows of thick vegetation. This type of terrain bred the threat of the typical guerrilla, a farmer by day and fighter by night, a member of an irregular Viet Cong unit who rarely strayed far from his or her ancestral home. Their firepower was not of major concern, but they made up for it with their familiarity with the terrain. And the knowledge of that land brought with it the scourge of mines and booby traps, from small “toe-popper” mines to mortar and artillery rounds, and many undetonated

500-pound bombs dropped from the air. They were all used to deadly effect.

Together, these environments were a mixture of contrast and contradiction that would try the infantryman's soul. While more than 100 inches of rain fell annually, watering the fertile rice fields, desert-like cacti existed near the swamps and rice paddies. Temperatures on the coast or in the valleys of the piedmont sometimes soared to more than 100 degrees, yet the hilltops in the piedmont or the mountains could be shrouded in clouds and rain, whipped by high winds that drove temperatures to bone-chilling lows. The cold, driving monsoon rain could abruptly cause temperatures to plummet and then rapidly rise after dawn.

"When I returned from Vietnam, the shrink at the VA said, 'You need to open up and talk about all this, and then you can forget about it and move on.' Forget about it? I told her, 'You are the crazy one here. How can I forget my buddies who were wounded or killed? Or humping all day through the jungles and rice paddies when it was so hot and humid you could hardly breathe? Or how about being so scared on an ambush when a whole enemy company was passing by within a few feet of you that you were wishing your heart would just quit beating because you knew they could hear it pounding in your chest? How could I forget all we went through every day when others back home were protesting, dodging the draft or running to Canada and calling us baby killers?' That stopped my therapy session, and my therapy now is talking to my fellow grunts who went through the same thing."

Raymond Moriarty, staff sergeant, 5th/46th Infantry

The rapid temperature changes, hedgerows, elephant grass that could cut through skin like razor blades, mountain peaks and thick jungle strained infantrymen day in and day out. Their lean, muscular bodies were racked with pain, skin rotting from fungus and water immersion along with ever-present fatigue. Yet they trudged on, carrying 60 pounds or more of food, small creature comforts and enough ammunition to hold their own against the enemy. In the infantry, what you don't carry you do without.

Infantry operations varied based on the enemy situation, the terrain and the availability of soldiers to meet a particular threat. Operations often overlapped, and infantry units were directed to fight outside their own areas of responsibility. In the Americal Division, Operation Wheeler and

Operation Wallowa were combined to destroy forces in the Hiep Duc and Que Son valleys, which overlapped with Operation Burlington Trail to secure Provincial Route 533 from Tam Ky to Tien Phuoc. Operation Pocahontas Forest was also aimed at neutralizing enemy forces in the Hiep Duc Valley. These operations in which we participated were sometimes conducted simultaneously and were only in Quang Tin province, yet our primary area of responsibility was in Quang Ngai province. Artillery and infantry battalions were nimbly cross-matched with armored cavalry as soldiers traded one piece of terrain for another to defeat the enemy wherever it could be found.

It was in the mountains that the infantry most often encountered the enemy at its strongest. The 5th/46th made numerous air assaults into the mountains, finding elaborate NVA base camps complete with underground ovens, classrooms, stockades for prisoners and elaborate sleeping quarters. During its more than three years in combat, the battalion discovered three enemy hospitals in the mountains, including operating rooms, post-triage bed wards and numerous medical supplies. The enemy's medical staff always pulled out just before our arrival, taking their walking wounded with them and carrying as many medical supplies as possible. Those enemy patients who could not walk crawled, just to get beyond the hospital complex to hide and hope for survival to fight another day. What was left for us to find were

dying patients, many with arms and legs rotting away. Around the camps were freshly dug graves of patients who had succumbed to their wounds, the sure sign that the enemy suffered enormous casualties from U.S. firepower.

It was at one enemy hospital, discovered during Operation Burlington Trail, that our battalion's soldiers were most exposed to man's inhumanity to man. Two women were found barely alive and emaciated, weighing no more than 50 pounds each. At first, our soldiers believed them to be enemy nurses, perhaps stricken by malaria. But when our interpreter arrived, they told their story of being captured in their hamlet in the valley below, taken to the hospital, and used for blood transfusions to wounded soldiers just off the operating table. In barely audible voices, the



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Soldiers of D Company, 1st/6th Infantry Battalion, 198th Light Infantry Brigade, Americal (23rd) Infantry Division move out on a patrol into Rocket Valley west of Chu Lai.

Photo courtesy Robert Richardson

women cried for vengeance and did not want to be separated from the medics who carried them off the mountain so they could be evacuated to a division hospital. “They felt secure around us,” one medic remembered. “They did not want to leave our side.”

The enemy found most of the infantry’s base camps (landing zones, or “LZs”) perched on high points in the rolling hills of the piedmont. Thus, these were marked for attack by the enemy because they controlled key terrain. The LZs were subjected to enemy mortar fire and ground attack, most often by carefully trained sappers whose stealth, deadliness and laser-like precision became legendary. Our battalion’s base camp, LZ Gator, took on more than 10 sapper attacks. Most had

limited success, but one attack killed our battalion commander. Each time, the enemy forces who perished in the attack were taken to a nearby hamlet, which was always populated with communist agents. There they would be buried by their comrades. The message the infantry sent was clear: we will not be intimidated.

These base camps, while always dangerous places to be due to enemy attack, became the infantryman’s only home of any permanence. The luxury of showers (from renovated oil drums), hot food from a mess hall and some time to unwind with music and beer – or something harder – was a fair trade for the requirement to man a bunker line at night but not have to hump a heavy rucksack during the day.



The coastal lowlands offered their own unique difficulties, principally from mines and booby traps. When our own battalion arrived in Vietnam, we were assigned the coastal area in Quang Ngai to neutralize the enemy. Inside of two months, eight men were killed and 123 wounded from mines, more than 60 of which were multiple amputations. From the simple punji stakes encountered early in the war, the enemy grew with sophistication as more and more munitions were used against them. Specially trained insurgents dragged off undetonated artillery rounds, mortar rounds or bombs from airstrikes and rigged them for command detonation or to be detonated by trip wires or pressure plates. It is perhaps in this environment that the

infantryman in Vietnam faced his greatest challenges. Day after day, each step taken to patrol and secure an area brought with it the very real possibility of death or horrible dismemberment. Trails were rarely used, but it made little difference in the deadly cat-and-mouse game with the enemy. Even undisturbed tread marks from armored personnel carriers were no safe path to follow – the enemy placed mines underneath the tread marks by digging in from the side.

The sacrifice of the infantry on the coastal plains of South Vietnam may never be fully appreciated. In one instance where one of our platoons walked into a mined area, the platoon's medic detonated a buried 105mm artillery round. The blast sheared off his legs below the knees and cauterized his wounds, reducing the bleeding. The medic promptly placed his leg stumps atop his rucksack to stem what bleeding there was and gave directions to the rest of the platoon on how to use his medical supplies to treat the many others who were wounded. How did we get such good men?

“Fear of the unknown was my biggest fear – the constant worry about what’s around the bend, booby traps, enemy contact or incoming enemy mortar rounds. It seemed to take a lot out of you physically and mentally. It was a tour of survival; our infantry company strength on the books was 164, but it seemed to sit at 65 to 75 in the field. For us, the focus was on our rifle company and the mission we were doing. I don’t think it took any of us long once we were in the bush to see that we were not going to win a total victory as our fathers and uncles did in World War II. But morale was good for the most part, except when we took casualties or had bad weather conditions and no resupply. But we always moved on with things.”

Bill Reid, specialist fourth class, 5th/46th Infantry

The infantry adapted wherever it was sent. Beginning in 1969, our battalion established “hunter-killer” teams: fully self-sufficient squads of soldiers, each having two M-60 machine guns, a sniper rifle, lots of ammunition and enough food to be able to defend itself, if attacked by a superior enemy force, until reinforcements could arrive.

The teams changed positions every two days but

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did not move far due to their heavy loads. When spotting small enemy groups they called in artillery fire, helicopter gunships or, if close enough, used their own weapons. These squads allowed several platoons to cover a much larger area to keep unrelenting pressure on the enemy.

One team was discovered by a large force of NVA regulars and quickly scampered into a large stand of 6-foot-high elephant grass where, as luck would have it, there was a depression in the ground that allowed the team to get below ground level. For more than 36 hours, the team remained silent as more than 100 enemy soldiers probed their position with heavy fire. The enemy was reluctant to enter into the high grass without knowing exactly where the team had hidden. The team chose silence over annihilation. On the third day they slipped away.

“My greatest fear in Vietnam was being maimed – losing my legs or, worse, my eyesight. My biggest hope in ‘Nam was getting some beer on the resupply bird or a stand down for a couple days, or that I could get some pound cake to go with the applesauce I already had. My hopes were small, immediate things. We instinctively knew we would not see a victory in Vietnam. ‘Victory’ was getting to go home. A professor in law school asked how I could put up with combat in the jungle. Easy answer: I did it for my friends, especially my radio operator and the other guys in the unit. And I didn’t have a clue about how the broader war was going. My view didn’t go much past the next tree line. And a tree line 200 yards away across a flat meadow still triggers my PTSD.” *R. Pamp, second lieutenant, 5th/46th Infantry*

“Eagle flights” were also used to great effect. Three Huey helicopters could carry an infantry platoon that would swiftly and efficiently search out suspected enemy positions; this use of air mobility made it possible to search as many as 10 locations in a single day.

First developed by the 9th Infantry Division in the Mekong Delta, “mechanical ambushes” (MAs) were adopted for use in mountainous terrain away from occupied civilian hamlets. These involved stringing a series of Claymore mines together off the side of a footpath believed to be used by the enemy. A wooden clothespin with thumbtacks on the two pincers was placed with a C-ration plastic spoon between the thumbtacks. The enemy tripped the wire and the spoon was pulled, allowing the thumbtacks to complete the circuit;

three to six Claymores exploded in unison. With this tactic a platoon could set up two live ambushes, with each team setting up an MA as well, thereby covering more terrain than the soldiers could cover themselves. Many nights, a live ambush team would hear their MA detonate in the distance and in the morning discover dead enemy forces or abandoned equipment with blood trails leading off into the bush. Eagle flights, hunter-killer teams and MAs were some of the force multipliers developed by the infantry in Vietnam long before the Army coined the term.

Although such small-unit tactics were increasingly and successfully employed by many infantry units, battalion-sized operations were still being conducted deep in the mountains against entrenched NVA units closer to Laos and Cambodia, along the infamous Ho Chi Minh Trail. Through it all, the infantry did everything it was asked to do and more.

The average infantryman in Vietnam faced a greater statistical likelihood of injury or death, more continuous close combat (due to the availability of troop transport via helicopter) and a greater variety of terrain than the average soldier would encounter in the big war. Further, this analysis would not be complete without a footnote giving weight to the added stress felt by infantrymen in Vietnam, knowing that their government had asked them to begin standing down with no armistice or clear-cut victory after so much blood was spilled.

Toward the end, as America gradually withdrew from Vietnam, the infantry spent more time working with the South Vietnamese army and regional or local force militias to conduct joint operations and advance “accelerated pacification” programs. There was not much confidence in these forces taking the lead, despite some good units. In the end, the infantryman in Vietnam led the way, but returned home without glory. 🌿

David W. Taylor served as an infantry platoon leader with Charlie Company, 5th/46th Infantry Battalion, in 1969. He was wounded twice. He retired as a colonel in the Special Forces, U.S. Army Reserve, and is the author of “Our War: The History and Sacrifices of an Infantry Battalion in the Vietnam War 1968-1971.”



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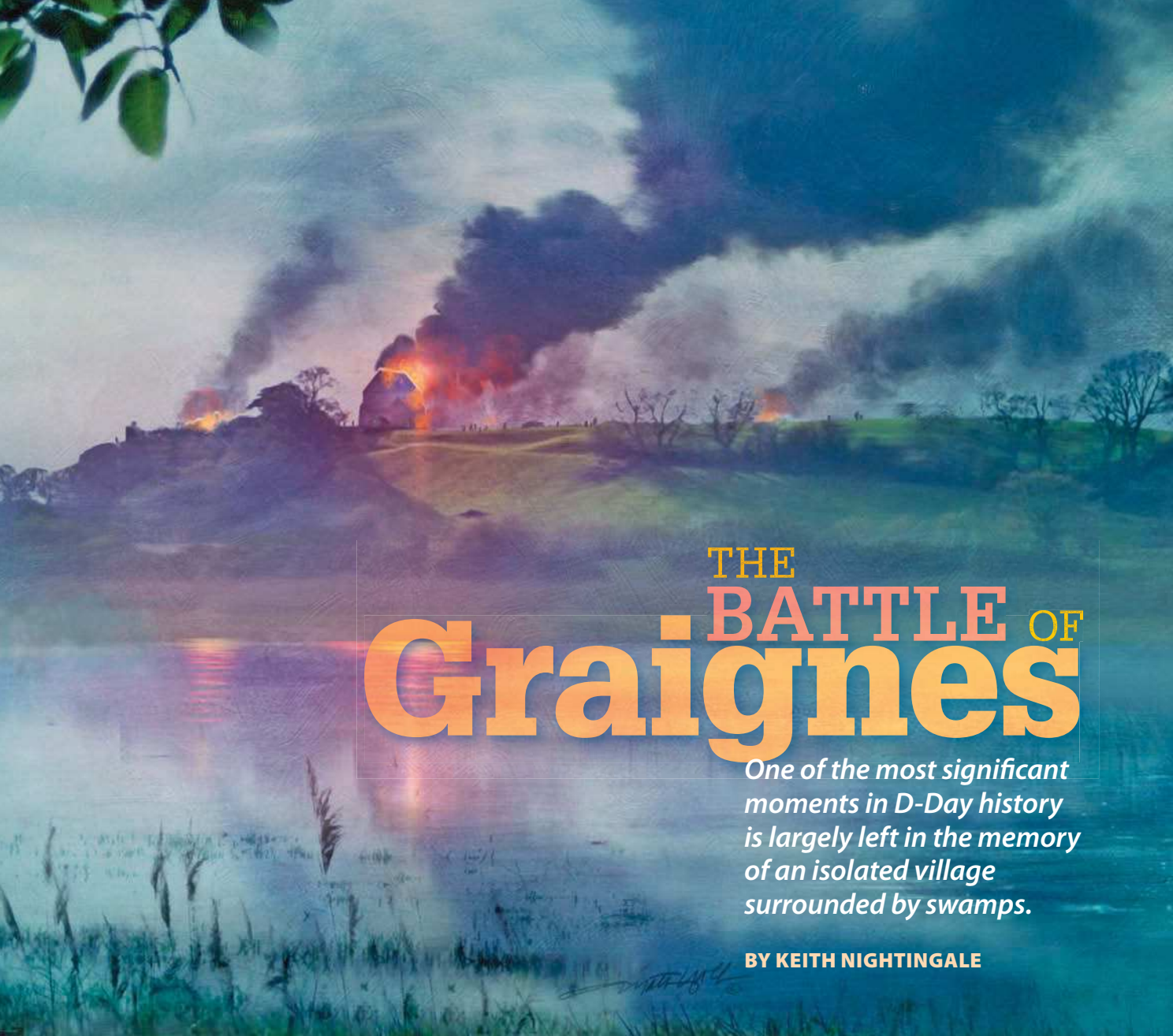
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THE BATTLE OF Graignes

One of the most significant moments in D-Day history is largely left in the memory of an isolated village surrounded by swamps.

BY KEITH NIGHTINGALE

A small town in the southern swamps of Normandy's Cotentin Peninsula is home to a story known to only the most ardent World War II historians and a fading number of veterans who served in the 82nd Airborne Division's 507th Parachute Infantry Regiment during the D-Day invasion.

The town is Graignes (GREN-yay). It is a symbol of the best of the Norman French and their unceasing affection for the young soldier-liberators who joined them on June 6, 1944. The history is of two peoples coming together by chance, not choice, and finding common cause. No better example exists for why the invasion took place.

South and slightly west of Carentan, a key objective of the Normandy invasion, is a large swampy area slightly smaller than the Okefenokee

Swamp in the southeastern United States. To the French, the area is simply known as Le Marais – the wet lowland residue of the Douve and Merderet rivers and their interconnecting offspring. It is a boggy land cut with many canals and creeks. Small standing plots of relatively firm ground are a part of this landscape, which has been farmed for centuries by people who prospered in their isolation. The air is heavier around Graignes than it is on the rest of the peninsula, the humidity fed by the copious quantities of open and nearly stagnant water. On a warm day the air hangs heavy, giving rise to density currents.

The area has many similarities with swamps of the southern United States. The trees tend to blot out the horizon. The light, as it filters through the woods, casts an amber hue on whatever it strikes.



Illustration by Matt Hall

The ground is a bit soft, bereft of rocks, and the surface dries fast into a powder. The roads pass darkly through the woods and are quickly lost to view. It is a lonely and isolated place where the few villages and farm communities are concealed. To a visitor who stumbles upon this area, it would be virtually impossible to visualize the significance it holds in American history.

In the center, on the largest and firmest ground, lies the village of Graignes. Inhabited since the time of the Vikings, it offered a safe haven off the path of surrounding and competing forces, away from civilization. At the highest point, fewer than 15 feet above sea level, stands the church, first constructed in the medieval era. Its present-day structure rises from the original foundation, which is how soldiers found it on June 6, 1944. Why and

how it came to be a new building is the story.

Attached to the 82nd Airborne for the D-Day invasion, the 507th was the last regiment to be dropped. Its troop-carrier elements had no previous drop experience and flew into the peninsula under a potentially disastrous combination of bad weather, a low ceiling and fully aware German anti-aircraft forces. Elements of the 507th were scattered from the tip of the peninsula near Cherbourg to Omaha Beach and the English Channel. Those few “sticks” (20 to 23 paratroopers per stick) that were dropped on target quickly discovered that their zones were in the middle of the swamp. The majority of the 507th who survived the night did so because they were mis-dropped on or near the 505th drop zone, near Ste. Mère-Église. One part of the regiment, however,



The punishment for known or suspected support of the invaders would be immediate death.

had an experience reminiscent of the Alamo, with the fervent support of people they had never met: the people of Graignes.

Around 2 a.m. June 6, 12 sticks of 3-507th PIR troopers landed relatively close together in the swampy land well south of Carentan. In the early-morning light, small groups of soldiers were able to see the steeple of the Graignes church and moved toward it as if drawn by a magnet. By 10 a.m., 25 soldiers led by Capt. Leroy Brummitt emerged on the edge of town. With the soldiers was an unusually large quantity of weapons and ammunition bundles – the residue of a regiment – machine guns, mortars and ammunition for both.

By noon, Maj. Charles Johnston, also from the 3-507th, arrived with more soldiers. The officers had a short debate. Brummitt thought it best to move immediately north toward Carentan and link up with elements of the 101st Airborne Division. Johnson thought that was too risky and believed it best to hold until relieved. Besides, Graignes was at the confluence of the few road nets that laced the area, all of which ended at Carentan, headquarters of the German defenses between Omaha and Utah beaches.

Graignes was to become an Alamo-like position with outposts guarding each road, machine-gun positions and mortar pits dug, and forward observers placed in the church tower. Over the rest of the day and night, small groups of soldiers emerged from the swamps and coalesced on the position. By nightfall on June 6, 182 soldiers, including 12 officers, manned the perimeter. Some were equally misdropped soldiers from the 101st.

Early in the morning of June 7, Johnson met with the mayor of Graignes, Alphonse Voydie, and the two attendant priests. He asked for the support of the village in retrieving supply bundles from the swamp and assistance in collecting food for the soldiers. He also asked permission, albeit a bit tardily, to use the church for his headquarters and a medical collection point. The mayor and priests readily agreed, but Voydie tempered his decision by saying that a vote of the entire town was needed due to the potential of a German reoccupation.

Virtually the entire population of the town quickly assembled in the church. The mayor described the issue and recommended support for the Americans. The parish, by a show of hands, unanimously agreed. The die was cast. The commitment was made despite the knowledge of

an intermittent Gestapo presence and strict wartime occupation rationing and monitoring at the outlying village markets. The punishment for known or suspected support of the invaders

would be immediate death.

Madame Germaine Boursier, owner of the only cafe/restaurant, assumed the task of food collection and distribution. The men and boys deployed throughout the area to collect bundles that had been dropped in the swamps. They recovered a large quantity of medical supplies, food, ammo, commo wire, telephones and weapons. However, there were no radios.

Boursier organized two food deliveries each day for the U.S. troops positioned in and around the village. Women of the village each added a little bit to their rations by buying just enough extra to not arouse suspicions. On June 8 and 9, this pattern was repeated without any contact with German forces.

On June 10, things changed.

It was midmorning when the forward observer in the church steeple saw a German column approach in administrative order, clearly not expecting resistance. The observer immediately notified the roadblock, which laid a Fort Benning-perfect linear ambush, virtually wiping out the column. Around 11 p.m., Germans began probing Graignes but made no significant entry. Ominously, one of the Germans shot had papers indicating that he was from a recon element of the 17th SS Panzer Division.

At 10 a.m. June 11, the townspeople and many Catholic U.S. soldiers entered the church, which had become an active aid station and command center, for Sunday Mass.

Partway through the service, a villager burst through the door shouting that the Germans were attacking. The U.S. soldiers raced to the rear of the church, grabbed their weapons, bolted through the door and ran to their positions. Mortar and artillery fire began landing in the village. Small-arms ricochets rattled off the stones and slate roofs. The villagers, at the mayor's urging, decided to remain inside the church and wait out the attack.

By 2 p.m. that day, the Germans were spotted in a distant field establishing a battery of 88mm antitank guns. At the same time, a determined infantry attack hit several points in and around the village. The Germans combined mortar and artillery attacks but were unable to break the

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The Germans knew
the Americans must
have had significant local
support. Despite a night's
worth of threats and
beatings, none of the
44 villagers gave up a name.

defensive lines. However, U.S. casualties began to mount. The wounded were collected by villagers and soldiers and deposited inside the church, which by this time was a fully engaged casualty collection point. The two village priests and their aged housekeepers assisted the few medics and a 3-507th doctor in treating the casualties.

As night fell, the villagers either went back to their farms or chose to remain with friends in the village. The defenders then heard the unmistakable sounds of mechanized vehicles. German artillery and mortar elements began to heavily engage the village. The primary target was the church steeple, which they hit on successive occasions – killing the forward observer and Johnson – thereby eliminating the most effective fire support for the defenders. Successive barrages also materially reduced the mortar crews who were dug in within the church cemetery. The loss of the previously effective indirect fire reduced the 3-507th's ability to defend its outposted positions.

Regardless of the loss of mortar support, the defenders still exacted a heavy price from the attackers. The narrow roads and limited dry ground forced the Germans to attack on restricted terrain, making them vulnerable to the paratroopers' ability to use interior lines and the firepower of the machine guns and automatic rifles. Hundreds of German bodies littered each lane as the afternoon wore on. However, the sheer weight of arms began to take a toll. One by one, each roadblock disintegrated under a combination of casualty attrition, effective German indirect fire and infantry numbers. By 5 p.m., much of the village was captured. Brummitt, now in command, ordered the survivors to escape into the swamps and move north to Carentan, where it was assumed the 101st would be.

At 10 p.m., life in Graignes changed dramatically with the arrival of the headquarters of the 17th SS Panzer Division. The unit had suffered an embarrassing near-defeat from a force of fewer than 200 paratroopers. It counted more than 500 killed in the approaches to the town and were treating more than 700 wounded. The commanding general arrived at the church in an angry, vengeful mood.

The Germans quickly took the U.S. wounded, the medics and the doctor to the edge of the

swamp and executed them in two groups. Separately, they marched the two priests into the rectory and summarily executed them. They then burned the remainder of the church and rectory but not before shooting the two old housekeepers in their beds. Sweeping through the town, they rounded up 44 villagers.

They were herded into the remains of the church, and

the SS began individual interrogations to determine who the village leaders were. In particular, they wanted the names of the mayor and those who supported the U.S. soldiers. They knew the Americans must have had significant local support. Despite a night's worth of threats and beatings, none of the 44 villagers gave up a name.

Frustrated at the lack of cooperation, the commander ordered the village to be ransacked. Houses were broken into. Windows, furniture and possessions were destroyed or appropriated. Any food was taken, and clothes burned or torn apart. On June 13, the village was burned. The villagers were banned from attempting to douse the flames.

The fire consumed 66 homes, the village school, Boursier's cafe, and the furniture, pews and remains of the church. More houses were scorched or intentionally damaged. By the end of the day, only two of 200 houses remained unscathed. The now homeless villagers gathered what possessions they had and moved to outlying farms to shelter with friends and face an uncertain future.

On June 13, on the most distant farm – which was still less than a mile away – the Rigault family began its morning routine. The two daughters, Marthe and Odette, moved from the house to tend to the livestock and the barn. Odette noticed several paratroopers moving furtively on the edge of the farm where the firm ground ended and the swamp began. On her own initiative, the 13-year-old girl ran to the soldiers and led them into the barn.

Pointing to the hayloft, she motioned them up the ladder and raced to the house to inform her parents. Over the course of the day, she and her sister walked the swamp edge and recovered more soldiers, always pointing them toward the barn. By late afternoon, 21 soldiers were in the hayloft. Madame Rigault began to feed them what little food the family possessed. Always mindful of possible German observation, she distributed the food in small, hidden quantities with the girls,

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who disguised their movements as part of the daily farming routine. On several occasions Germans checked for Americans, but the family always appeared to be isolated and alone.

The soldiers had hoped that the 101st would eventually move through the area. By June 15, the troops agreed that this hope was probably in vain. One soldier, a Louisiana Cajun, was enlisted to talk to Monsieur Rigault about the best route through the swamp to Carentan. Rigault went to several of his neighbors to develop a plan. He engaged 15-year-old Joe Folliot, who was familiar with the confusing maze of canals, creeks and outlets of the ancient swampland.

At 10 p.m., Joe appeared at the edge of the farm with a punt boat that could hold five soldiers. He began the long process of poling through the swamp, landing the troops on a spot past the German outposts and pointing them in the direction of Carentan. This process continued throughout the night. Several times, soldiers tried to give Joe money or small gifts. He refused with a whispered, “*Merci, American ... merci, American.*”

By June 16, 150 of the 3-507th troops had gained the front lines of the 101st – those left from the 182 who assembled at Graignes on June 6.

The troopers of the 101st might have provided the Graignes survivors a warmer reception had they known how important the stand of the misdropped 3-507th troopers had been to their own survival. The 17th Panzer had been ordered to reinforce the German headquarters at Carentan, but it did not get there before the 101st was able to capture the city on June 12. The chance encounter at Graignes, the intense combat and the inordinate casualties kept the division from reinforcing Carentan. Had it passed through Graignes without incident, the 101st would have had a much more serious problem.

History and memory took a long pause at this point. The war went on, peace arrived, and the town of Graignes managed to rebuild, isolated, as always, from the rest of the world. The quiet rural life went on with neither the American survivors nor the villagers aware of each others’ destinies.

In 1984, however, several survivors from the 507th, led by former Lt. Frank Naughton, made their first return trip to Normandy. They decided that they had to visit Graignes, where they had experienced one of the most dramatic moments in

The war went on, peace arrived, and the town of Graignes managed to rebuild, isolated as always from the rest of the world.

their lives. There, they reunited with the Rigault sisters, both married and middle-aged but still cognizant of the individual soldiers and overjoyed at their return. For the first time, the sisters and the villagers learned of the fate of the

soldiers they had harbored, and the soldiers of the consequences of their support.

The sisters introduced the veterans to the mayor, priests and villagers. They showed them the rebuilt church. The town spontaneously celebrated. The veterans were overwhelmed at the reception, especially in light of the price the village had paid for its support.

The veterans returned to the United States buoyed by the spirit of the village. They petitioned then-Secretary of the Army John Marsh Jr. to recognize the village and what it had done at such a great price. Marsh was a dedicated historian and Airborne-qualified. He studied at length the slim material available regarding Graignes, questioned survivors, and concluded that what occurred there was truly unique and demanded recognition.

On July 6, 1986, Marsh visited Graignes with a number of 507th veterans and presented 11 villagers with the Distinguished Civilian Service Award. Six were posthumous. The church was rededicated and a plaque describing the events was posted on its side. A Mass was held to both celebrate and remember.

Most villagers who survived the occupation have since died. However, every D-Day anniversary, younger generations of Graignes assemble by the church and recount the events of that day and the memory of their predecessors, who made a wise but costly decision. Sometimes a veteran or active-duty soldier participates in the assembly, but U.S. attendance is not the purpose of the gathering. The village remembers what it did and why, and that is all that matters. 🌿

Keith Nightingale is a retired U.S. Army colonel who served two tours in Vietnam. He commanded airborne battalions in both the 509th Parachute Infantry Regiment and the 82nd Airborne Division, and later commanded both the 1/75th Rangers and the 1st Ranger Training Brigade. He leads historical battlefield tours and presentations for military personnel who visit Normandy, France, each year for the anniversary of the D-Day invasion.

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Post 56 had fallen to just 22 members. Its charter was in peril. There was no post home at the time, but there was money in the bank from a property sale. That money could have been turned in with the charter. Instead, the few Legionnaires on the roster came up with a different plan. They bought a new building, pooled their talents, remodeled the building, devised a new leadership model and since then have watched the post thrive.

A Tale of Two Posts

BY STEVE B. BROOKS



Post 24's membership was stuck at about 500 and idling. Then, as the post-9/11 generation of veterans began to discover it, the historic American Legion post was transformed, adding more than 250 new members, mostly those who have served in the global war on terrorism. The key to the post's growth and success, say Legionnaires of eras going back to World War II, is that the young members were not forced to wait long to lead.

Chartered in 1922 on Virginia's eastern shore, Post 56 in Cheriton, Va., was a regular meeting place for World War II and Korean War veterans until the late 1950s, when a fire destroyed the facility. Members of the post were forced to meet wherever they could, including private homes and church halls. Membership dwindled. Even after the post purchased a building in nearby Cape Charles that once housed a car dealership, membership and community involvement continued to decline.

Membership dropped to a low of 22 in the mid-2000s but slowly began to rebound, rising to 76 in 2007. That's when a few of the members saw an opening to turn things around.

With more than \$300,000 in the bank after selling the former car dealership property, the post started looking for a new home and eventually found its current location: a vacant grocery store

in rural Cheriton. Once work began to remodel the store into a bricks-and-mortar post home, more and more local veterans became interested.

"I always said that if we had a building that was our own, a place for veterans to go to and call their own, that we'd be successful," says Post 56 member Jim Chapman, who has served as post commander and adjutant, and is currently the Department of Virginia's deputy judge advocate. "But that building needed work when we got it, and everyone pitched in to make it what it is today."

Since then, and because of everyone pitching in, membership has boomed – up more than 200 percent, to 243. With that growth and the new post home, The American Legion's presence in the area has become more visible, and every new member feels a sense of ownership of the refurbished building.

See **POST 56** on page 40

"We try to bridge the gap and create leaders out of both the older and younger guys. You can't recruit these young guys into the Legion and then tell them they can't do anything for a few years. You have to give them some responsibility. When we do that for them, the Legion honestly grows on them."

One of the original 13 colonies, Virginia is a state filled with cities and towns established at the dawn of America. Few places in the state capture Virginia's historical identity better than Alexandria's Old Town section. It was the home of George Washington and, for a time, Gen. Robert E. Lee.

Old Town is also home to the iconic Gadsby's Tavern on Cameron Street, where Thomas Jefferson entertained guests and U.S. presidents later dined. When the tavern building fell into disrepair, it was American Legion Post 24 that stepped up, taking control of the structure and eventually returning it to the city.

Post 24 still meets at Gadsby's, a building that conjures a blend of colonial spirit and Beltway nostalgia. Amid all this history, there's a new kind of energy permeating Post 24, thanks to a wave of post-9/11 veterans who are members there. Of the

nearly 700 Legionnaires on Post 24's roster, nearly 250 have served in uniform since Sept. 11, 2001. Half of the post's executive committee falls into that demographic. What brought them in? A change in culture that gave the younger veterans positions of responsibility at the post.

"You hear all the time, 'Wait, it's the World War II guys' turn," says 25-year-old Jesse Stevens, a Marine Corps veteran and member of Post 24's executive board. "It goes all the way up to Korea, Vietnam and the first Gulf War. If you keep making people wait, you're never going to get new leaders. And because people aren't made to wait here, I think that's why you've got the younger, active mix here that you do. People here want to help. They want to volunteer. And when they find out they can be in the Legion, they want to join. When they can contribute, they want to stay."

See **POST 24** on page 42

POST 56 *continued from page 39*

The grocery store had left behind more than two tons of food, which the post donated to a VA food bank. Chapman obtained the proper construction permits, after which his sons – both contractors – helped transform the building, donating hundreds of hours of labor.

Other post members helped get the post up and running, but they had to convince the community that the operation was not simply going to be a bar. Together, Chapman and Past Post Commander Walter Dellenback educated local residents on what The American Legion is and does. The Cheriton Town Council, after learning more about the Legion, approved the project.

“We were not going to let this turn into a bar,” Chapman says. “You’ve got to have the socialization side of things, but you also have to fill a need within the community. We have people here interested in children and youth activities. We have people interested in dealing with veterans issues. We have people interested in all sorts of things. You find people and interests that match, and you’ll be successful. We had to make that clear and then follow up on it.”

Marine Gen. James Mattis – then serving as U.S. Joint Forces/NATO Supreme Allied Commander-Transformation – attended the grand opening ceremony in November 2007, which included hundreds of community members and a Boy Scout color guard, along with current and former national and department Legion officers.

That was just the beginning. Since then, Post 56’s membership has continued to grow, hitting 100 percent of this year’s goal in December. Post 56 Legionnaires have been recent recipients of the department’s Post Commander and Legionnaire of the Year awards.

An Auxiliary unit and Sons of The American Legion squadron were established and are thriving, with more than 100 members combined. The post sponsors a Boy Scout troop, sends five participants and two staff members to Boys State each year, sends more youths to the Department of Virginia Junior Law Cadet program, conducts an Oratorical Contest and hosts two annual blood drives. Community service hours logged by Post 56 members topped 14,000 in 2012.

“The fact is, this has been a gathering place for the community seven days a week,” Post 56 member Joe Vaccaro says. “We’ve got kids who



Members of Post 56 in Cheriton proudly stand outside their building, which they remodeled and opened in November 2007. They are, from left, Bill Stramm, Jim Chapman, Bill Burton, Bob Roche, Ed DeAngelis, Don McIvlee, Steve Downs, Jack Woolley, Marvin Milton and Joe Vaccaro. Photo by Eldon Lindsay

come in here for events and to eat hot dogs. We have other groups who come here to meet. It’s a very family-oriented post. Because the community was so involved when we were building this, they really feel invested in what we have here.”

It’s a diverse membership where cliques are not allowed. “You never know who you might have sitting next to you,” Vaccaro says. “There might be a farmer on one side of you, and a dean from a school at Boston University might be on the other side. There’s no rank here.”

But there is a clear-cut leadership model. No one can serve more than two years as post commander, and that person is responsible for finding the next commander and mentoring him or her before handing over the reins. It’s the same with every post officer. “That way you’re always having new people moving into leadership roles,” Chapman says. “You need to pass on what you know to the next person.”

Ive Chubb, post adjutant, uses Post 56’s Facebook page to spread the word about its events and activities. “Our Facebook audience is growing, so we’re trying to use it more,” Chubb says. “I also use the local newspaper and radio station. People love to see all the stuff we’re doing.”

Meanwhile, Chapman travels across the department, talking about what the post has accomplished, giving credit to the entire membership. As member Ralph Orzo explains, it takes a bit of an epiphany for a post to make this kind of transformation.

“Once a post realizes that it is responsible for providing an image of The American Legion within the community, it changes the way that post does things,” Orzo says. “It changes the way you think.” 🌿



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Bill Aramony, 60, a Navy veteran and Post 24's commander, says the process of moving younger veterans into leadership is part of the post's business plan.

"Our goal is to get from downstairs to upstairs," he said, referring to the difference between being a social member in the club room and an active member involved in programs. "We do push really hard for volunteers. We want to get these guys involved right away so that they develop a sense of belonging. That's easy when you focus on values, because I think the values between the younger guys and the older guys are the same.

"We try to bridge the gap and create leaders out of both the older and younger guys. You can't recruit these young guys into the Legion and then tell them they can't do anything for a few years. You have to give them some responsibility. When we do that for them, the Legion honestly grows on them."

Younger Post 24 veterans work alongside their older counterparts when they visit comrades in assisted-living facilities, organize blood drives, help with community cleanups and participate in Alexandria's George Washington Birthday Parade. The post also offers a healthy mix of American Legion youth programs such as Boys State, Legion Baseball and Junior Law Cadets.

Jim Glassman, Post 24's adjutant and a 40-year Legion member – and the Department of Virginia's 2012 Legionnaire of the Year – says the post's older members quickly bought into the idea of putting post-9/11 veterans in leadership positions. "There was no resistance," Glassman said. "They saw that these younger guys wanted to work, wanted to volunteer. When they join, we ask what they're interested in doing. Then you take it from there."

For Stevens, that sometimes includes helping younger veterans find employment. "The American Legion family is a 4-million-person network," he said. "Think of those connections and think of that kind of clout. That's a lot of people with a lot of the same values. That's people in all walks of life and in every kind of business. There are people in corporations, in the federal sector. And they're also plugged into their local communities. That is one of the best job networks out there."

Jason Dean, 23, and Austen Nickell, 22, are both



Post-9/11 veterans Austen Nickell, Jerome Schorr and Jason Dean, from left, have learned that Post 24 offers far more than they expected. Photo by Eldon Lindsay

active-duty Air Force personnel at Joint Base Anacostia-Bolling in nearby D.C. As two of Post 24's younger members, they see the Legion as full of opportunities: first, as a way to volunteer in their communities, and second, as a way to establish connections in the business world once they're discharged.

"I like the fact that I was treated like an adult and given respect the first time I walked in the post," Nickell says. "They immediately gave me an opportunity to prove myself. It's very fulfilling to be able to give back."

Dean's father served in the military, and when he passed away, a Georgia Legion post performed funeral honors and paid Dean's dues for his first year. When he returned to the D.C. area, Dean looked up the Legion online and found Post 24.

"I didn't know what to expect," Dean says. "But my first night here, they really tried to get me involved. It wasn't pushy, but they let me know they could use me. And they also were here to help. Some of these guys were in the military for 20, 30 years. There's no better place to get career advice for the military."

While the dynamic at Post 24 may seem unique to some, at least one person says this is how it should be Legion-wide. Warden Foley, a World War II Navy veteran, has been a member of the Legion for 65 of his 86 years.

"We work these younger guys into committees, and they contribute," Foley says. "That's how the Legion operates. That's how it was when I joined. That's how it needs to be." 🌿

Steve B. Brooks is social media editor for The American Legion.

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ASSAULT

on the Nation-State

The United States came of age in a centuries-old system of global order. Can we keep that order from falling apart?

BY ALAN W. DOWD

For the better part of 400 years – ever since the Peace of Westphalia – the nation-state system has served to organize the world. But today this global order is under assault from four divergent movements: post-nationalism (think globalization), supranationalism (think the International Criminal Court), transnationalism (think al-Qaida) and non-nationalism (think failed states).

Given that the United States is the most powerful nation-state, these movements are at odds with American interests.

NON-NATIONALISM Let's start where our ancestors did, in a world where nation-states didn't exist. We see glimpses of that world today in Mali, Libya, Somalia, Yemen, Afghanistan, Pakistan and even in the ungoverned swaths of Mexico. These failed and failing states are places where the government has lost the ability to fulfill its central purpose – namely, performing basic functions such as maintaining public order and essential infrastructure, controlling borders, and ensuring that what happens within their borders does not adversely impact neighboring states.

The latest Failed States Index suggests that this problem is worsening in scale and severity as

once-stable countries enter the ranks and already-unstable countries register the worst declines on the index since it was first published in 2005.

Failed states open the door to piracy, terrorism and drug trafficking – problems that wreak havoc around the world. It's no coincidence that the deadliest parts of Mexico are under the control not of the Mexican government but of narco-armies, or that the pirate plague is raging in the waters between the failed states of Somalia and Yemen, or that the former has been under the control of a movement aligned with al-Qaida, or that al-Qaida's franchise on the Arabian Peninsula has seized large chunks of Yemen.

Indeed, what's happening in Yemen and Somalia today is similar to what happened after the collapse of the nation-state in Afghanistan in the 1990s: weak central governments leaving a vacuum filled by extremists.

TRANSNATIONALISM That brings us to transnational groups such as al-Qaida and other stateless actors. Transnationalism is different from





non-nationalism in that transnational groups are cohesive and have a clear objective: to erode the nation-state system from below. As then-Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld concluded in 2004, America's jihadist enemies have a simple but sweeping goal: "to end the state system, using terrorism, to drive the non-radicals from the world." Love him or hate him, Rumsfeld was right about this. Consider the words of al-Qaida leader Ayman al-Zawahiri, who calls on his followers to create a theocratic geopolitical power that "does not recognize nation-state, national links or the borders imposed by occupiers."

In a sense, the war on terror is an outgrowth of nation-states failing or refusing to live up to the responsibilities of sovereignty – and allowing transnational movements such as al-Qaida to exploit the resulting openings:

- The Taliban government of Afghanistan and al-Qaida embraced transnationalism, and so the Taliban allowed al-Qaida to create a terrorist campus inside Afghanistan, which Osama bin Laden used as a launching pad for attacks against U.S. targets around the world.
- Post-Taliban Afghanistan, Yemen and Iraq, on the other hand, want to control what happens inside their borders but are simply too weak to hold back transnational movements.
- Pakistan plays games with sovereignty, claiming it is too weak to control its territories with one breath but then invoking its inviolable borders with the next. SEAL Team 6 exposed this duplicity and revealed Islamabad's complicity in transnational terrorism.

SUPRANATIONALISM If transnationalism erodes the nation-state system from below, supranationalism whittles it away from above. The intriguing thing about supranationalism and transnationalism is that both seek a stateless world, although their visions for what such a world would look like are dramatically different.

Examples of supranationalism are organizations like the United Nations, the International Criminal Court (ICC) and the European Union (EU).

Rumsfeld worried about “the erosion of respect for state sovereignty” caused by supranational organizations. This erosion, he warned, “gives states an excuse to take the easy way out by ... punting problems to supranational bodies, instead of taking responsibility.”

That’s what happened in the Balkans in the 1990s. As historian William Pfaff observes in “The Wrath of Nations,” the United Nations and the European Community (forerunner to the EU) “proved an obstacle to action, by inhibiting individual national action and rationalizing the refusal to act nationally.”

According to the U.N. Charter, the main goal of its founders was not to create a supranational government, but rather to protect the “sovereign equality,” “territorial integrity” and “political independence” of nation-states. In practice, however, the United Nations has increasingly encroached upon sovereignty by using a thickening thatch of subagencies and treaties – “lawfare,” as the critics call it – to constrain the political independence of nation-states.

The ICC is a good example of this. According to a *Wall Street Journal* report, the ICC has conducted investigations “into whether NATO troops, including American soldiers, fighting the Taliban may have to be put in the dock.” The ICC has no authority to take such action against the United States since it is not party to the treaty, but that’s not stopping ICC lawyers from lunging at U.S. sovereignty.

In addition, the United Nations has watered down the principle of sovereignty by not holding nation-states accountable for their actions. In 2003, the U.N. Security Council took eight weeks to approve a resolution requiring Saddam Hussein’s Iraq to comply with existing resolutions. Worse, the council refused to enforce the resolution, apparently concluding that passage of the resolution was an end in and of itself, rather than a means to an end.

Similarly, in 2010 North Korea torpedoed a South Korean ship in international waters, killing 46 sailors. All the United Nations could muster was a pathetic report condemning the attack without condemning – let alone punishing – the attacker.

Yet while the United Nations fails to hold aggressors responsible for their misconduct, U.N.-

affiliated bodies such as the ICC impugn and investigate the United States for trying to uphold the international system.

POST-NATIONALISM Post-nationalism envisions a world after or beyond the nation-state. One of the main drivers of post-nationalism is globalization, the term used to describe today’s highly integrated global economic system.

A recent report by the National Intelligence Council warns that in the “hyper-globalized” world that could emerge in the coming decades – a world where power has devolved to megacities, nongovernmental organizations and multinational companies – countries “wedded to the notion of sovereignty and independence” will “find it difficult to operate successfully.”

Already, multinational corporations are more concerned about global labor rules, trade agreements and tariff issues than about the laws of nation-states, relying on supranationalism’s economic, legal and commercial regimes – which bypass borders – to do what nation-states used to do. (Speaking of bypassing borders, post-nationalism is also visible in the open-borders movement. A borderless world by definition is a world without nation-states.)

To be sure, the United States has benefited from globalization’s lower transaction costs, free-flowing communications and open commerce. In fact, some contend that globalization is just another word for Americanization, and they may be right. After all, President Harry Truman argued in 1947 that “the whole world should adopt the American system” of free markets and free enterprise. Ever since World War II, the United States has been an engine of globalization, promoting free trade, open markets and a system of rules to govern international interaction.

The operative word here is “international” – between nations, not beyond them.

Truman, like many other Americans, would probably conclude that globalization is good until it infringes on American sovereignty or threatens U.S. security. It pays to recall that our enemies are exploiting the promise of a borderless world to attack the world. Consider what’s happening in cyberspace, or what happened on 9/11. Post-nationalists ignore these downsides of globalization.

RESISTANCE The United States has been resisting these movements throughout its history.

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For example, the Congressional Research Service maintains a tally of U.S. military interventions abroad. Of the hundreds of examples of intervention before this century, 60 involved failed states – otherwise known as “non-nationalism.” That’s what triggered U.S. intervention in Spanish Florida (1816), Colombia (1868), Mexico (1873-1896), Korea (1888) and many other places. In fact, over a century ago, President Theodore Roosevelt argued that the United States had a duty to intervene in places where “impotence” results in “a general loosening of the ties of civilized society” – in other words, countries that are either unwilling or unable to fulfill their nation-state responsibilities.

As to post-nationalism and supranationalism, consider our founding documents. Although the founding fathers embraced universal truths, they ardently believed in nationhood. Far from espousing a utopian supranationalism or post-nationalism, the founders wrote the Constitution expressly for “the people of the United States” and announced their independence by declaring that it was time for “one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another.” Moreover, the Federalist Papers expressly speak of international borders, “our country,” “dangers from abroad” and nations with “opposite interests.” To be sure, Americans have looked beyond borders to pursue close bonds with people of good will – witness America’s friendships with such diverse places as Israel and India, Germany and Japan, France and the Philippines – but always in a state-to-state context.

Finally, the United States has resisted transnational movements. Yesterday, it was that long, twilight struggle against communism. Today, it’s the generational struggle against jihadism.

THE NATIONAL INTEREST The United States should answer this multifront assault on the nation-state by taking a number of steps:

■ *Hold nation-states accountable for their actions.* As the Obama administration concluded in its 2010 National Security Strategy, the United States is best suited “to pursue our interests through an international system in which all nations have certain rights and responsibilities.” The strategy goes on to argue that the United States needs to provide incentives for nation-states to act responsibly, and to enforce consequences when they don’t.

So what consequences have North Korea, Sudan and Syria faced for their actions? And what incentive is there for Nigerians, Malians and Libyans to hold their nation-states together?

■ *Strengthen and support at-risk nation-states.* The natural order of the world is not that orderly. The nation-state system has brought a measure of order, but it takes hard work to maintain it. This translates into helping nation-states control their borders, holding them accountable for what happens within their borders and supporting their sovereignty. However, the idea that what happens within a nation-state is unimportant to other nation-states is as pernicious as the idea that borders are irrelevant. Consider an example close to home: What happens on my neighbor’s property is of no concern or threat to me unless or until my neighbor harms someone, encroaches on my property, or through action or inaction negatively impacts me and my property. In the same way, what happens inside nation-states becomes a concern when governments harm their citizens or negatively impact neighboring nation-states.

■ *Promote the spread of liberal democracy.* It is not the United Nations or the ICC – well-intentioned as they may be – that have guaranteed freedom or independence, but rather a small community of democratic nation-states. As British statesman George Walden once observed, “The most reliable unit of peace is a prosperous, educated, stable, democratic nation.”

■ *Guard against further erosion of U.S. sovereignty.* America is deeply interconnected with the world, and this interconnection serves U.S. interests in areas as diverse as trade, technology and transportation. We should ignore the siren song of isolation, but given the growing number of assaults on national sovereignty, perhaps it’s time for Congress to develop a “sovereignty impact statement” to measure how new treaties and laws affect America’s independence.

The United States has thrived in the nation-state system. We were born into it, raised in it, grew to master and shape it, and today we benefit from it, sustain it and dominate it. If it ceases to be the main organizing structure for the world, there is no guarantee that we Americans will have the same position and place we enjoy today. 🇺🇸

Alan W. Dowd is a contributing editor for The American Legion Magazine.



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Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara delivers a late-night Pentagon briefing on the Gulf of Tonkin incident Aug. 4, 1964. Hours later, President Lyndon Johnson spoke to the American people by radio, describing an attack by North Vietnamese vessels on two U.S. Navy destroyers. Corbis

'An attack took place'

Evaluations of the Tonkin Gulf incident continue to ignore eyewitness testimony.

BY LLOYD R. "JOE" VASEY

A prominent conspiracy scenario alleges that top government figures – including President Lyndon Johnson and Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara – were less than forthright or entirely honest about what led to increased U.S. involvement in Vietnam, particularly the Gulf of Tonkin incident. During the August 1964 attacks, I was very much in the operations and intelligence loop as chief of staff for Vice Adm. Roy Johnson, commander of the U.S. 7th Fleet, and I'd like to demolish some of the myths.

Bona fide ambush President Johnson inherited a commitment, established in 1947 by the Truman administration, to a strategy of containing aggressive communist expansion throughout the world. This had strong support from Congress and the American public, in whose minds the memories of World War II were still fresh. In May 1959, the Communist Politburo of North Vietnam made a decision to "liberate" South Vietnam through political subversion and infiltration by guerrilla fighters and supplies. Johnson's predecessor, John F. Kennedy, expanded the U.S. military presence in Vietnam, and no roars of protest went up.

In late 1963, North Vietnam decided to accelerate its efforts. The National Security Council approved CIA support for South Vietnamese covert operations, known as "Plan 34A," against North Vietnam. Meanwhile, mounting U.S. casualties were taking a toll on public and congressional support.

Intelligence-gathering DESOTO patrols had been

initiated in 1962 off the coast of North Vietnam. The destroyer USS *Maddox* commenced a DESOTO patrol on July 31, 1964, and as in previous patrols was ordered to avoid provocative actions and remain in international waters. On Aug. 2, while *Maddox* was 28 miles from the coast and heading away, it was suddenly attacked in broad daylight by three North Vietnamese torpedo boats. *Maddox* avoided the torpedoes, and together with aircraft from USS *Ticonderoga* sank or damaged the attacking boats. Critics called this patrol "provocative," claiming it was conducted in support of a Plan 34A raid. But McNamara testified before the Senate that *Maddox* was at least 130 miles to the southeast and had not started its patrol during the Plan 34A operation. Rather than a reprisal air-strike, Washington dispatched a note of protest, and Johnson authorized the DESOTO patrol to continue with *Maddox* accompanied by another destroyer, USS *Turner Joy*.

On the evening of Aug. 4, while the ships were on patrol approximately 60 miles from the North Vietnamese coast, task group commander Capt. John Herrick observed on radar at least five contacts that he evaluated as probable torpedo boats. The ships increased speed and changed course. About an hour later, both destroyers held radar contacts approximately 14 miles off on a course and speed indicating rapid closure. Soon after, *Maddox* reported that an attack appeared imminent.

A flurry of messages followed with supporting details – some ambiguous, some conflicting, and

many responding to urgent questions from higher commands and officials in Washington. One of Herrick's early messages reported that the two ships were under "continuous torpedo attack," but after further review he suggested "complete evaluation before any further action taken." After further evaluation with both commanding officers, Herrick sent a clarifying message: "Certain that original ambush was bona fide. Details of action following present a confusing picture ... Own ship's screw noises or rudders may have accounted for some. At present cannot even estimate the number of boats involved."

Critics and historians make much of Herrick's earlier message expressing doubt, but they downplay his final message. At hearings conducted by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and in subsequent interviews, he reaffirmed that he had no doubt an attack occurred.

Creation of a myth The events occurred on a dark, moonless, overcast night, so some uncertainty existed as to precise details. But the convincing statements of eyewitnesses make clear that an attack took place. Numerous personnel reported sighting torpedo wakes, multiple lights and silhouettes of boats; one target was taken under fire by *Turner Joy*. Hits were observed and it disappeared from all radars.

Soon afterwards, a legal officer was helicoptered to *Maddox* to collect logs, plots and track charts. He described later that when he and ship personnel constructed a composite chart of the event, it proved remarkably consistent between the two ships, and indicated that the contacts matched characteristics of torpedo boats.

McNamara sent two senior DoD civilian officials to Subic Bay, Philippines, to interview key enlisted and officer witnesses from the destroyers. I was requested to sit in at these interviews. Our sailors and young officers were impressive and convincing, and essentially provided verbal confirmation supporting the official reports. The official message report to McNamara concluded with a statement to the effect that attacks against our destroyers the night of Aug. 4 had occurred, although the details required further data refinement.

Sadly, in critiques and articles on Tonkin in the years since, scant if any credibility is given to the sailors and officers who provided evidence of the torpedo-boat attacks. As with eyewitnesses anywhere, one or two or even three could have been partly in error – but not all 18 of them on everything. These were highly trained, experienced and

competent military personnel reporting directly in their areas of expertise and duty.

In the past decade, the Gulf of Tonkin has again commanded attention with the declassification by the National Security Agency (NSA) of more than 140 formerly top-secret documents – including signals intelligence (SIGINT) reports – pertaining to Aug. 4. There may be convincing arguments from a SIGINT perspective that there was no evidence of North Vietnamese torpedo-boat attacks, but there is also dismissal of the value of the human testimony. "Without the signals intelligence information, the administration had only the confused and conflicting testimony and evidence of the men and equipment involved in the incident." NSA historian Robert Hanyok concluded. This is myopic reasoning at best.

In 2005, after the declassification of documents, Louis Giles, NSA's director of policy and records, said, "The COMINT (communications intelligence) does not prove that an attack did or did not occur."

All operational commanders in the Pacific involved in Tonkin were convinced that an attack took place – but only after they and their staffs had thoroughly assessed all available evidence. The locus of confusion seems to have been in Washington, which suggests that whoever briefed national leadership failed to place in clear perspective, or even consider, the value of the professional testimonies. As for insinuations that Johnson deliberately misled the American public to start a war, my readings and research found no proof to support such a claim. He did, after all, send out a protest rather than an airstrike after the first attack.

Meanwhile, researchers have overlooked the probable role of China in the attacks. Chinese naval vessels were known to be based on nearby Hainan Island and operating in the area. It is possible that some of the early radar contacts were in fact Chinese *Swatow* patrol boats vectoring Vietnamese P-4s. During that period, China's top leadership was very supportive of North Vietnam.

In early 1965, with the commitment of major U.S. ground forces to the Vietnam struggle and the start of a sustained bombing campaign against selected North Vietnamese targets, U.S. casualties mounted – as did public and congressional opposition to the war. The myths about the Gulf of Tonkin incident were cast in iron, deceiving generations to come. 🌿

Lloyd R. "Joe" Vasey is a retired Navy rear admiral. A longer version of this article appeared in the August 2010 issue of Proceedings.

FLAG REWARDS

STARS, STRIPES AND SALES

World War II vet uses rewards program to help Iowa post grow with city.

BY ELDON LINDSAY

As the winds blow across suburban Ankeny, Iowa, the sight and sound of U.S. flags is ever-present, due in part to Gerald Ballard. Since 1986, the World War II Coast Guard veteran and member of Albaugh-McGovern Post 42 has been selling flags to businesses in his community to keep his post afloat and flag etiquette in check.

Ballard, 91, has 105 customers and is getting more all the time, as Ankeny grows in size and population. He sells more than 400 flags annually and nets the post a tidy sum for his efforts. "It's to support my Legion post," he says. "I'm not bragging, but I make the post \$6,000 to \$7,000 per year, and that feels pretty good. I was in the feed business for 37 years and was my own salesman, so I figured I was cut out for it."

Mitchell Arney, Post 42's adjutant, says Ballard has long been the backbone of the post and is the Legionnaire who first signed him up for membership.

"He is the foundation of this post. He has been here forever and been involved in all of our activities, and gives more than 100 percent in everything he does," Arney says. "Gerald has become the resource for people who want a quality flag and want to support The American Legion and our community."

Post 42 was near bankruptcy eight years ago when Ballard made a firm push to sell more flags and get it back on solid financial footing. Soon the post had money in the bank, and it now provides funds to several Legion youth programs, as well as groups and organizations in the community.



Photo by Eldon Lindsay

"The Legion flag sales are important for what we want to do," Ballard says. "If we want to continue to support the community, we've got to have some funds. The day is coming – I'm crowding 92 – when I won't be selling. But for now it's better than sitting in a chair."

The post has also benefited from the Flag Rewards program offered by American Legion Emblem Sales. Ballard and Post 42 participate in the program, and earned more than \$1,100 in rewards in 2012 to spend in 2013. By purchasing U.S. flags from Emblem Sales, posts earn free credit to purchase virtually anything from the Emblem Sales catalog or website – including, but not limited to, awards, uniforms, shirts, caps, pins, coins, patches, flags and baseballs.

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Watch a video about Gerald Ballard and Post 42:



www.legion.org/legiontv, "Flag Business Booms"

VERBATIM

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ashamed of that.
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never will be.**

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MEMBERSHIP

NEW POSTS

Post 183, Geraldine, Ala. Chartered April 17 (34 members)

Post 110, McKinney, Texas Chartered April 15 (15 members)

Post 5, Irwindale, Calif. Chartered April 1 (15 members)

Post 118, Kalamazoo, Mich. Chartered March 25 (16 members)

Post 281, Laguna Niguel, Calif. Chartered March 25 (15 members)

Larry A. Hoff ePost 2100, Guyton, Ga. Chartered March 11 (26 members)

Eugene "Cougar" Greene Sr. Post 48, Warm Springs, Ore. Chartered Feb. 27 (23 members)

MILITARY AFFAIRS

Pentagon multiplies CYBERCOM forces

The Pentagon has unveiled a massive expansion of U.S. Cyber Command (CYBERCOM), *Defense News* reports. In the next three years, the command focused on defending U.S. computer networks will grow from 900 personnel to nearly 5,000. Eighty percent of the new billets will be military, the remaining 20 percent civilian.

As *The Washington Post* reports, the expansion is part of a wider effort at CYBERCOM to field three new forces for the digital age:

- **National mission forces**, which will focus on protecting computer systems and networks that serve critical infrastructure.
- **Combat mission forces**, which will augment regional combatant commands in conducting offensive operations by providing a cyber component to a broader military campaign or operation.
- **Cyber protection forces**, which will defend DoD's many networks.



CONVENTION

Legacy Run registration ends Aug. 9

With a fundraising goal of \$450,000, the eighth annual American Legion Legacy Run is set to leave Indianapolis Aug. 18 for a five-day, 1,500-mile journey to the 95th National Convention, in Houston. Online registration is open through Aug. 9.

For the first time, the Legacy Run will be sponsored by USAA, the Legion's preferred provider of financial services. National Commander Jim Koutz will participate in the run, joining riders and volunteers at stops, meals and evening events. Donations will go toward college scholarships for children of U.S. military personnel killed on or after 9/11.

In Houston, the Texas American Legion Riders will host a series of events through Aug. 24, and the entire Legacy Run group will lead the National Convention Parade Aug. 25.



Register online and see the route:

 www.legion.org/riders

TROOP SUPPORT



304,701

Number of pennies collected by Post 57 in Grandview, Wash., in its penny-a-day fundraiser for Operation Comfort Warriors. The American Legion's OCW program provides therapeutic and recreational items for recovering military personnel.

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HONOR & REMEMBRANCE

A year of darkness, death and tears

Joseph R. Barna was “one scared kid” when he and 6,000 other Marines landed in Korea in 1952.

“I never realized what my next year would be like,” Barna says in a story he contributed to The American Legion’s new Honor & Remembrance web page. “It was like jumping into a hole where you couldn’t see the bottom. My only thought was, ‘Will I ever see my family again?’ I could not possibly expect what I would do and see in the year to come.”

The sights, sounds and smells of war have stayed with him. He describes every night in Korea as “dark and cold. Trying to keep warm, you would be jolted by the sound of hundreds of bugles. They were not playing any song you could know, but it was a sound I will never forget. After minutes that would seem like hours, the bugles would stop. Then the sky was lit up by flares.

“As these flares would fall, you would see and hear hundreds of screaming North Koreans and Chinese troops coming at us. We would call for artillery and mortars. We would hear what sounded like freight trains going over our heads. When this finally let up, you found yourself facing hundreds of enemy soldiers whose only thought was to kill Americans. Minutes of battle turned to hours, and when it was over, you could see the dead and hear the cries of the wounded. Such combat was repeated almost every day and night.”

Barna estimates that of the 6,000 Marines who landed, only 750 returned home. “To be able to cry is one of the most beautiful things in life, I believe,” he says. “When I was born, I must have been issued a certain amount of tears to use up in my lifetime. In Korea, I thought I had used all of them up. I cried every time I saw a brother die or be wounded.”

Today, Barna serves as part of an honor guard and a member of Post 473 in Freeland, Pa., where he helps his post support the local community through scholarships and youth sports.

Read more of Barna’s story online:

 www.legion.org/honor

Tell your own story of military service:

 www.legion.org/legiontown



TECHNOLOGY

Tour Pointe du Hoc virtually

Smartphone users can now learn the history of Pointe du Hoc in France and virtually tour the D-Day landing site with the American Battle Monuments Commission’s free Pointe du Hoc mobile app.

This GPS-enabled application allows virtual visitors to experience the site where U.S. Army Rangers scaled the 100-foot cliffs, destroyed a critical German battery and took control of the coastal highway, playing a crucial role in the Allied success of D-Day. The app is available for both iPhone and Android devices and can be found in the iTunes store or Google Play.

With the app, users can:

- Use GPS-enabled mapping to walk Pointe du Hoc and see the German observation bunker, the 155mm gun emplacements, the anti-aircraft gun position and more.
- Learn the story of the Rangers from the 2nd and 5th battalions who fought the battle.
- Listen to the Rangers recount their D-Day stories.
- See historic photos from June 6, 1944.
- Understand the role that the battle of Pointe du Hoc played in the Allied success of D-Day.



POLLS

Shifting opinions on war

55 Percent of Americans who consider Operation Iraqi Freedom “very successful” or “somewhat successful,” up from 43 percent in 2008, according to an NBC News/*Wall Street Journal* poll

51 Percent who said U.S. entry into the Korean War was a “mistake,” with 35 percent saying it wasn’t, according to a 1952 Gallup poll

34 Percent who said U.S. entry into the Korean War was a mistake, with 47 percent saying it wasn’t, in 2000



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AMERICANISM

Missouri teen wins 76th Oratorical Contest

Agnes Rieger of Kansas City, Mo., took first place at the 76th American Legion High School Oratorical Contest in Indianapolis on April 21.

Sponsored by Robert H. Baker Post 95 in Liberty, Mo., Rieger earned an \$18,000 college scholarship for her oration, "Let's Talk About Pennsylvania." Her speech topic had its origins in a school assignment for which Rieger and her classmates were asked to discuss the Constitution and their obligations as citizens. They chose a misspelling of "Pennsylvania" in the document as their starting point.

Elizabeth Scannell of Goose Creek, S.C., placed second for her oration, "The Constitution: An American Position Description." Scannell was sponsored by Post 166 in Goose Creek and earned a \$16,000 scholarship.

Rachel Schartz of Humboldt, S.D., placed third for her oration, "Sewing Freedom." Schartz was sponsored by William H. Crippen Post 62 in Humboldt and earned a \$14,000 scholarship.



National Commander Jim Koutz congratulates Oratorical contest finalists Elizabeth Scannell, Agnes Rieger and Rachel Schartz, from left. Photo by Eldon Lindsay

The three finalists had five minutes to prepare to speak on an assigned topic drawn randomly by National Commander Jim Koutz: Article II, Section 1, Paragraph 5, regarding citizenship and age requirements for the office of president.

The Legion's National High School Oratorical Scholarship Program encourages young people to improve their communication skills and study the Constitution. Since 1937, the annual contest has awarded more than \$3 million in education scholarships.

Watch the winning oration:

 www.legion.org/legiontv

EDUCATION

Veterans using Post-9/11 GI Bill still responsible for debts incurred



Q: *I am enrolled at a university and just received a debt letter from VA regarding my tuition. I am 100 percent eligible for Chapter 33 Post-9/11 GI Bill education benefits and thought VA paid for tuition and fees at the university. Why do I have a debt over tuition and fees paid to my school?*

A: When you enroll in school and take classes, you enter into an agreement with the school to pay for those classes and the associated fees.

VA pays the tuition and fees to the school on your behalf when the school certifying official (SCO) certifies that you are enrolled in classes.

By law, you are responsible for any debt incurred while receiving benefits under the Post-9/11 GI Bill. VA is required by law to recoup that debt. You are responsible for keeping track of your account balance for tuition and fees. Visit your school's financial office regularly to review your account, ensuring that charges are correct and that payments and refunds are correctly processed. Contact your SCO to make sure that the certification sent to VA matches your schedule.

Get in touch with VA's Debt Management Center (DMC) if you receive a letter; the DMC is the sole authority in resolving debts. Contact DMC at (800) 827-0648 or dmc.ops@va.gov.

Valerie Heffner, a Marine Corps veteran and member of American Legion Post 27 in Arizona, is a past vice president of the National Association of Veterans' Program Administrators. askvalerie@legion.org

TECHNOLOGY

A new kind of sea base

According to the Defense Tech blog, the Navy wants to build "unmanned platforms that it can place in the depths of the world's oceans, to have them float to the surface when the military needs the supplies or equipment stored within them."

DARPA engineers are researching how these platforms could handle the pressure of deep-water storage – and how they might respond when controllers call upon them to support military operations years after being pre-positioned in the world's oceans.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

North Korean hairdos (and don'ts)

The North Korean government has officially approved 18 hairstyles for women and 10 for men. The barber-shop-conformity campaign is part of a broader effort "to clamp down on Western influences," the *Daily Mail* reports. This is a reprise of a 2005 campaign by Pyongyang aimed at making sure North Koreans "trim (their) hair in accordance with Socialist lifestyle," as state-run TV explained at the time.



A Tribute to Those Who Served

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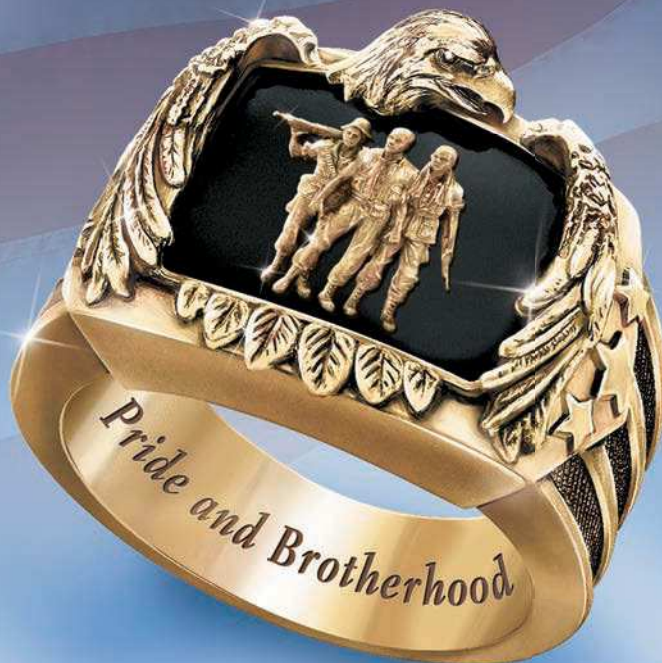
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ASK A SERVICE OFFICER

Proof of service in Vietnam, medical documentation required for AO claims



Tracy L. Davis
Department Service
Officer, Missouri

Q: How do I know if I have a claim for Agent Orange?

A: Many Vietnam War veterans are concerned that they have been exposed to Agent Orange, the chemical herbicide used to destroy jungle foliage to expose enemy troops. Public Law 107-103 provides a presumption of exposure to herbicides for all veterans who served in Vietnam during the war.

You do not have to prove you were sprayed, or in an area that was sprayed, if you served from Jan. 9, 1962, to May 7, 1975. However, before you file a claim, you must have proof of service in Vietnam during wartime as well as medical documentation of the condition or conditions officially recognized by VA. The following is a list of diseases that VA recognizes as related to Agent Orange exposure:

- Peripheral neuropathy (acute and subacute)
- AL amyloidosis
- Chloracne
- Chronic B-cell leukemia (added in 2010)
- Hodgkin lymphoma
- Ischemic heart disease (added in 2010)
- Multiple myeloma
- Non-Hodgkin lymphoma
- Parkinson's disease (added in 2010)
- Porphyria cutanea tarda
- Prostate cancer
- Respiratory cancers (e.g., lung, larynx, trachea and bronchus)
- Soft-tissue sarcoma (other than osteosarcoma, chondrosarcoma, Kaposi's sarcoma or mesothelioma)
- Type 2 diabetes

Learn more about these diseases:

 www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/agentorange/diseases.asp

Vietnam War veterans who were exposed to Agent Orange may be eligible for an Agent Orange registry health exam, health-care benefits and disability compensation. Contact your local American Legion accredited service officer to discuss possible benefits and file a claim:

 www.legion.org/serviceofficers

Do you have a question for Department of Missouri Service Officer Tracy Davis about the claims process or veterans benefits in general? Send it to askso@legion.org.

LEGISLATION

Legion spearheads progress in state credentialing

Having won passage of several key credentialing bills on the federal level, The American Legion is concentrating on state legislatures, pushing for similar measures that allow military training and skills to fulfill requirements for professional certifications.

So far, 37 states have either passed credentialing legislation or are considering it. A total of 37 credentialing bills have been signed into law, and another 85 are in various stages of consideration in state legislatures.

For example, in Indiana, a law that will make military medic training the "civilian equivalent" of training required to earn an emergency medical technician or paramedic license takes effect July 1. Other credentialing wins have come in Georgia, where veterans' licensing applications will receive special consideration from a committee charged with giving waivers for military skills, and in Maryland, where Legionnaires helped introduce and pass legislation of a measure that allows military training, education and experience to count for certification qualifications.

The Legion is currently working to pass credentialing legislation in active sessions in California, Ohio, New Jersey, Florida and Texas. To find out if legislation is being considered in your state and to learn how to push for its passage, contact Steve Gonzalez at sgonzalez@legion.org.

VERBATIM

Cyber and drone warfare have become part of the equation for 21st-century combat, and those who fight such battles with distinction certainly deserve to be recognized. But The American Legion still believes there's a fundamental difference between those who fight remotely, or via computer, and those who are fighting against an enemy who is trying to kill them.

American Legion National Commander Jim Koutz, on a proposed Distinguished Warfare Medal recognizing drone pilots and cyber warriors that would have ranked higher than the Purple Heart and Bronze Star with Combat "V." On April 15, Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel canceled the medal in favor of a device that can be affixed to previously awarded medals.



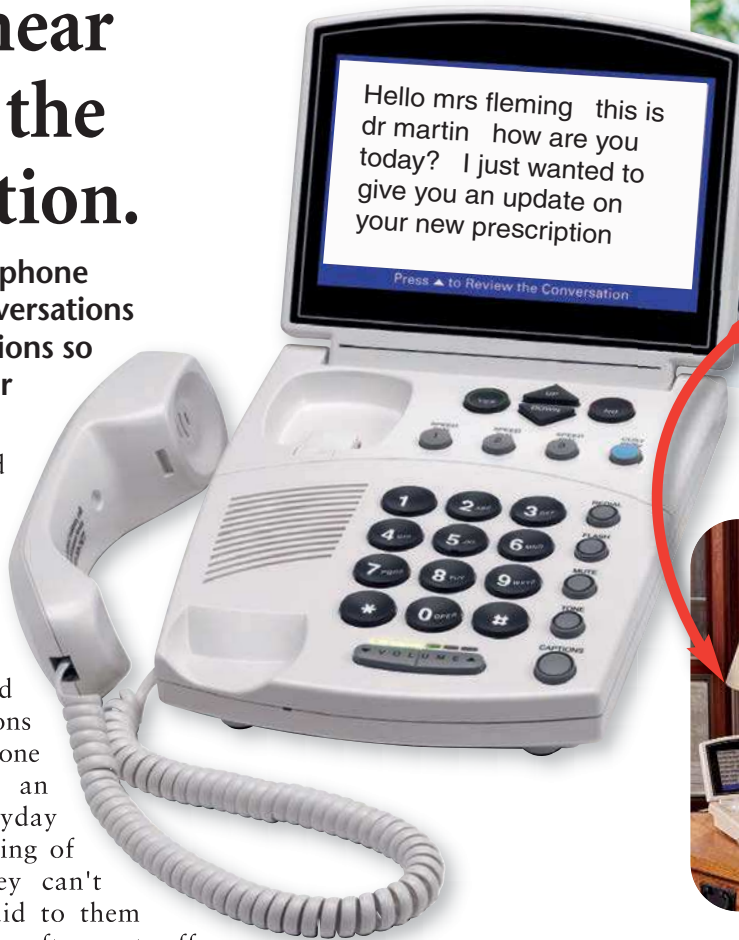
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PERSONAL FINANCE



Don't talk yourself out of planning, saving for retirement

I'm a huge fan of feel-good stories, happy endings and good fortune. So the Employee Benefit Research Institute's 2012 Retirement Confidence Survey, published this spring, was far from my favorite read. This survey is a kind of "state of retirement planning" document that comes out each year and is filled with a host of statistics.

This year's results make it clear that "retirement" and "confidence" resemble oil and water more than peanut butter and jelly in America today. Here are a few gems from the survey:

- 60 percent of workers have less than \$25,000 in savings and investments.
- More than half of workers have not tried to determine how much money they will need for retirement.
- Only 14 percent of workers are very confident in their ability to retire comfortably.

Not exactly a story headed for a happy ending. So it's time for you and me to encourage ourselves, our children, grandchildren and anyone who will listen to turn this ship around by championing four basic principles:

Start now. There are always valid reasons for not putting away money for retirement. Reframe the question this way: Why should I be saving for retirement? The above-mentioned statistics alone could be motivation enough, but maybe spending some time envisioning what you would like your retirement to look like can help get your savings efforts started.

A little goes a long way. If you or someone you know are

FOCUS ON FINANCES



J.J. MONTANARO

still decades away from retirement, contributing just a few dollars each month can add up to thousands or even hundreds of thousands in savings by retirement. But no matter where you are on the age spectrum, it all matters. As one of my multiple retirement-savings efforts, I add \$50 each month to government I-bonds. My thought is that each addition represents a dinner out with my wife.

Let Uncle Sam help. Tax deductions, tax credits and tax-deferred growth are all part of the package the federal government offers to those who commit some of their hard-earned dollars toward retirement. Take advantage of these incentives and encourage others to do the same.

Leave no free money on the table. I've personally met hundreds of individuals who don't take advantage of free money offered by their employers through matching contributions in work savings plans. Take advantage of the free money.

Look in the mirror, within your circle of family and friends, or around the workplace or neighborhood, and encourage the people in your sphere of influence to get in the retirement-savings game. No one is going to do it for us, so let's do it ourselves.

J.J. Montanaro is a certified financial planner for USAA, The American Legion's preferred provider of financial services. Submit questions for him online.

www.legion.org/focusonfinances

VERBATIM

"I noticed the sticker on the back of your car. Take your hero out to dinner when he comes home. Thank you both for serving. Him deployed and you for waiting."



SoldierCity.com

Anonymous note signed "United States Veteran," written on the outside of an envelope containing \$40 and placed on the windshield of Samantha Ford in Arlington, Mass., whose bumper sticker reads, "½ of my heart is in Afghanistan." Ford's boyfriend, Spc. Albert DeSimone, said he appreciates that a stranger thought of her during his absence.

SERVICE

Legionnaire receives Presidential Citizens Medal

Mike Dorman, a member of North Carolina's Fuquay-Varina Post 116, received the Presidential Citizens Medal at the White House on March 11. The award recognizes his work as founder and executive director of Military Missions in Action (MMIA), which helps veterans with physical and mental disabilities achieve independent living.

Since 2008, MMIA has completed more than 100 home-modification projects, including wheelchair ramps, roll-in showers, new roofs and other repairs.

"As long as there are men and women wearing the uniform of our country, there will be a need for our services," Dorman said. "We're just getting started."

Watch a video of Dorman receiving his medal:

www.legion.org/magazine



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ELECTRIC CHAIN SAW SHARPENER

LOT NO. 68221/93213

SAVE 44%
\$27.99 REG. PRICE \$49.99

Item 68221 shown

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PITTSBURGH 12" RATCHET BAR CLAMP/SPREADER

LOT NO. 46807/
68975/69221/69222

SAVE 66%
\$1.99 REG. PRICE \$5.99

Item 46807 shown

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Item 47737 shown

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1" x 25 FT.
TAPE MEASURE

ITEM 47737/69080/
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US*GENERAL

580 LB. CAPACITY
FOUR DRAWER
TOOL CART

LOT NO. 95659

SAVE \$130
\$99.99 REG. PRICE \$229.99

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AUTO-DARKENING
WELDING HELMET WITH
BLUE FLAME DESIGN

LOT NO. 91214

SAVE 50%
\$39.99 REG. PRICE \$79.99

Item 91214 shown

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WIRELESS DRIVEWAY
ALERT SYSTEM

LOT NO. 93068/69590

SAVE 56%
\$12.99 REG. PRICE \$29.99

Item 93068 shown

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4 PIECE 1" x 15 FT.
RATCHETING
TIE DOWN SET

LOT NO. 90984/60405

SAVE 52%
\$7.99 REG. PRICE \$16.99

Item 90984 shown

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2000 LB.
ELECTRIC WINCH
WITH REMOTE CONTROL
AND AUTOMATIC BRAKE

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61258/61297

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Item 68146 shown

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1.5 CUBIC FT.
ELECTRONIC
DIGITAL SAFE

LOT NO. 91006

SAVE \$50
\$99.99 REG. PRICE \$149.99

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RECIPROCATING SAW
WITH ROTATING HANDLE

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SAVE 50%
\$19.99 REG. PRICE \$39.99

Item 65570 shown

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TAPE MEASURE

ITEM 47737/69080/
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REG. PRICE \$5.99

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US*GENERAL

580 LB. CAPACITY
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TOOL CART

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AUTO-DARKENING
WELDING HELMET WITH
BLUE FLAME DESIGN

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WIRELESS DRIVEWAY
ALERT SYSTEM

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4 PIECE 1" x 15 FT.
RATCHETING
TIE DOWN SET

LOT NO. 90984/60405

SAVE 52%
\$7.99 REG. PRICE \$16.99

Item 90984 shown

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2000 LB.
ELECTRIC WINCH
WITH REMOTE CONTROL
AND AUTOMATIC BRAKE

LOT NO. 68146/
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Item 68146 shown

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1.5 CUBIC FT.
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LOT NO. 91006

SAVE \$50
\$99.99 REG. PRICE \$149.99

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RECIPROCATING SAW
WITH ROTATING HANDLE

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\$19.99 REG. PRICE \$39.99

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Photo by Sid Hastings

HONOR & REMEMBRANCE

A Gold Star Court of Honor, restored

In the early 1920s, the Gold Star Mothers of St. Louis created a memorial inside the median of Kingshighway Boulevard to honor sons who died in the Great War. Called the Gold Star Court of Honor, it honored 1,185 heroes with individual bronze plaques next to sycamore trees. Today, all that remains of the original memorial are a few trees, 30 years after bulldozers dug up the plaques to expand the street.

Using metal detectors, picks and shovels, members of Rollo-Calcaterra Post 15 in St. Louis recovered 752 of the 1,185 plaques, housing them in the basement of the Soldiers' Memorial Military Museum for years. Then, Skip Berger and other post members proposed a rebuilt Gold Star Court of Honor at the Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery, where 149 of the World War I veterans are buried. Funding came through donations from Post 15 and the community, as well as a \$250,000 grant from the St. Louis County Port Authority Community Reinvestment Fund.

The memorial features the 752 salvaged plaques arranged alphabetically on two black granite walls, symbolizing the two sections of Kingshighway where the original memorial was located. Each wall is flanked by columns listing the names from the missing plaques, including Medal of Honor recipients Capt. Alex R. Skinker and Sgt. Fred Stockham.

More than 200 people attended the rededication. Julie Vinnedge, who lost her Marine son Phillip in Afghanistan, spoke at the ceremony on behalf of the Gold Star Mothers of St. Louis. "One of the things a Gold Star Mother is always worried about is that her son will be forgotten," Vinnedge said. "Whenever I speak, I always try to say, 'Please, don't forget our fallen.' And that's what Skip did; he wasn't going to allow the men and women of World War I to be forgotten."

Read more about the Gold Star Court of Honor:

www.stl-lestweforget.org

VERBATIM

“Let us not kid ourselves. She was a very divisive figure. She was a real toughie. She was a great patriot with a great love for this country, and she raised the standing of Britain abroad.”

Bernard Ingham, former press secretary to Margaret Thatcher, on the legacy of Great Britain's first – and still only – female prime minister. Known as the Iron Lady, Thatcher held office from 1979 to 1990. She died of a stroke April 8.





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How to submit a reunion

The American Legion Magazine publishes reunion notices for veterans. Send notices to **The American Legion Magazine, Attn: Reunions, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206**, fax (317) 630-1280, e-mail reunions@legion.org or submit information via our website, www.legion.org/reunions.

Include the branch of service and complete name of the group, no abbreviations, with your request. The listing also should include the reunion dates and city, along with a contact name, telephone number and e-mail address. Listings are publicized free of charge.

Your notice will appear on our Web site within a week and will remain available online until the final day of your reunion. Upon submission, please allow three months for your reunion to be published in print. **Due to the large number of reunions, The American Legion Magazine will publish a group's listing only once a year.**

Notices should be sent at least six months prior to the reunion to ensure timely publication.

Other notices

"In Search Of" is a means of getting in touch with people from your unit to plan a reunion. **We do not publish listings that seek people for interviews, research purposes, military photos or help in filing a VA claim.** Listings must include the name of the unit from which you seek people, the time period and the location, as well as a contact name, telephone number and e-mail address. Send notices to **The American Legion Magazine, Attn: "In Search Of," P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206**, fax (317) 630-1280 or e-mail reunions@legion.org.

The magazine will not publish names of individuals, only the name of the unit. Listings are published free of charge.

Life Membership notices are published for Legionnaires who have been awarded life

memberships by their posts. **This does not include a member's own Paid-Up-For-Life membership.** Notices must be submitted on official forms, which may be obtained by sending a self-addressed stamped envelope to **The American Legion Magazine, Attn: Life Memberships, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206.**

"Comrades in Distress" listings must be approved by the Legion's Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation division. If you are seeking to verify an injury received during service, contact your Legion department service officer for information on how to publish a notice.

To respond to a "Comrades in Distress" listing, send a letter to **The American Legion Magazine, Attn: Comrades in Distress, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206.** Include the listing's CID number in your response.

"Taps" notices are published only for Legionnaires who served as department commanders or national officers.

AIR FORCE / ARMY AIR FORCES

5th BG (H) (WWII), Wichita, KS, 9/18-22, Richard O'Brien, (314) 223-4646, barbrich79@aol.com; **6th Bomb Wing**, Roswell, NM, 9/20-21, Bobby Pike, (479) 452-7191, bbpik@aol.com; **15th AAF 99th, 301st, 451st & 455th Bomb Grps**, Tempe, AZ, 10/17-19, Winson Jones, (425) 223-2101, winjones@comcast.net; **18th FW**, St. Louis, 10/17-20, Rich Dallavalle, (314) 434-1680, rcddall1@att.net; **31st TFW (Tuy-Hoa AB, Vietnam)**, Fairborn, OH, 9/5-8, Paul Goodrich, (812) 597-4553; **90th SRW (SAC)**, Wichita, KS, 9/12-16, Chuck Hale, (785) 865-5794, chucknhale@gmail.com; **405th Bomb Sqdn (Laon, France)**, Pigeon Forge, TN, 9/17-20, Willie Wise, (717) 838-1561, twocrickets70@aol.com;

511th AC&W Gp - 613th, 847th & 848th AC&W Sqdns, Nashville, TN, 10/2-6, Don Simmons, (972) 231-6518, dona7112@sbcglobal.net; **601st Tact Cntl Assn (601st TCW & Sub Units, Germany)**, Branson, MO, 10/2-5, Jim Ernst, (575) 430-3904, jimernst@q.com; **781st Bomb Sqdn 465th BG**, Charleston, SC, 11/10-13, Orren Lee, (605) 339-1297, cleel3@midco.net; **1503rd Air Trans Wing (1946-1966)**, Fremont, NE, 9/19-22, Bill Teichman, (309) 796-2084, billallyj@att.net; **6994th Sec Sqdn & Dets**, Branson, MO, 9/26-28, Bob Hull, (740) 924-5261, shibob27@columbus.rr.com; **Nuclear Wpns Techs Assn**, Denver, 9/5-7, Bob Welz, (502) 645-3181, rwelz@aye.net; **Phan Rang AB**, San Antonio, 10/3-6, Doug Severt, (505) 417-3181, djsevert@hotmail.com;

ARMY

1st Armd Div Assn (WWII-2013), Milwaukee, 8/22-25, Joe Sachen, (310) 990-8811; **3rd Bn 71st Air Def Arty**, Colorado Springs, CO, 8/17-20, Donald (Byrd) Yarbrough, (309) 689-0449, ducky2@sbcglobal.net; **5th Bn 60th Inf Assn (9th Inf Div)**, Washington, 9/11-15, Lee Alley, (307) 331-8902, lee@leealley.us; **7th Armd Div (WWII)**, Cincinnati, 9/18-22, Cheryl Higley, (860) 678-1018, cmhig58@sbcglobal.net; **7th Eng Bn Vietnam Vets Assn**, San Diego, 9/19-22, Norm Johnson, (989) 635-6653, delta1@centurytel.net; **31st Inf**, Dayton, OH, 8/8-10, Charlie Tapp, (864) 473-1999, ctapp94@gmail.com; **32nd Red Arrow Vets Assn**, Racine, WI, 9/7-8, Neil Sorenson, (414) 541-1349, 32ravaed@wi.rr.com; **34th Eng Bn**, San Antonio, 8/15-18, Jesse Alejandro, (432) 631-1249, jesse.alejandro@univpp.com; **41st Inf Div (WWII)**, Seattle, 8/15-17, Carolyn Bach, (573) 535-9833, div41@yahoo.com; **47th Cbt Support Hosp (Desert Storm)**, Las Vegas, 6/22-24, Shelly Teubner, (541) 220-6114, shellyteubner@yahoo.com; **119th Assault Heli Co (Vietnam)**, Dothan, AL, 9/10-12, Bob Kilpatrick, (860) 256-7527, hosco6@aol.com; **170th Assault Heli Co "Bikinis" (Vietnam, 1965-1971) & 52nd Avn Bn**, St. Louis, 9/26-29, Henry Winther, (847) 546-7186; **240th Bn & All Attached Units**, Branson, MO, 11/5-11, David Hoss, (501) 203-5379, hossdavid246@yahoo.com; **263rd Maint Co (LEM)**, Washington, 10/16-20, Jack McCabe, (847) 778-3473, jmccabe51@gmail.com; **281st Assault Heli Co**, St. Louis, 8/1-4, Don Torrini, (618) 920-3810, donaldo12@aol.com; **282nd Assault Heli Co**, Kansas City, KS, 6/14-16, John Bard, (936) 558-7639, blkcatmail@suddenlink.net; **383rd Air Deliv Det**, Clinton, MD, 8/23-25, Walter Pickett, (301) 728-2045, walter.pickett@verizon.net; **503rd Parachute RCT Assn (WWII)**, Bentonville, AR, 9/5-8, Nelson Gatewood, (870) 856-2216, wwii503rdprct@yahoo.com; **509th Engr Co (Panel Bridge) (Vietnam, 1965-1972)**, Walker, MN, 9/5-8, Jerry Sexton, (405) 373-0354, lindasexton@sbcglobal.net; **516th Eng (Hanau, Germany)**, Owensboro, KY, 9/24-26, Thomas Collins, (765) 825-6436, twcgam@aol.com; **577th Eng Bn**, Branson, MO, 9/13-15, Jim Stevens, (910) 579-5704, jrs562@aol.com; **630th Eng LE**, Branson, MO, 9/19-22, Cecil Brown, (731) 415-6460, ceclnbrown@charter.net; **A Co 12th Eng Bn (Dexheim, Germany, 1971-1973)**, Salmon, ID, 6/6-13, Larry Andrews, (208) 756-8521, lbandrews@custertel.net; **Alaska Nike Vets**, San Francisco, 9/6-7, Ed Hansen, (608) 715-6292, reunion@a-2-562.org; **Americal Div (23rd Inf) Vets Assn**, Nashville, TN, 9/11-15, Ron Green, (423) 716-5978, ron_green46@yahoo.com; **Army Sec Agency (ASA) 328th C/R Co (Bad Aibling, Germany, 1952-1956)**, St. Augustine, FL, 10/29-31, Robert "Bob" Hilliard, (803) 791-1873, r.l.hilliard@att.net

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Cell Phone Inspires Chicago Doctor to Design Affordable Hearing Aid

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Reported by J. Page

CHICAGO: A local board-certified Ear, Nose, Throat (ENT) physician, Dr. S. Cherukuri, has just shaken up the hearing aid industry with the invention of a medical-grade, affordable hearing aid. **This revolutionary hearing aid is designed to help millions of people with hearing loss who cannot afford—or do not wish to pay—the much higher cost of traditional hearing aids.**

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—Dr. Babu, M.D.
Board Certified ENT Physician

Dr. Cherukuri knew that untreated hearing loss could lead to depression, social isolation, anxiety, and symptoms consistent with Alzheimer's dementia. **He could not understand why the cost for hearing aids was so high when the prices on so many consumer electronics like TVs, DVD players, cell phones and digital cameras had fallen.**

Since Medicare and most private insurance do not cover the costs of hearing aids, which traditionally run between \$2000-\$6000 for a pair, many of the doctor's patients could not afford the expense. Dr. Cherukuri's goal was to find a reasonable solution that would help with the most common types of hearing loss at an affordable price, not unlike the **"one-size-fits-most" reading glasses** available at drug stores.

He evaluated numerous hearing devices and sound amplifiers, including those seen on television. Without fail, almost all of these were found to amplify bass/low frequencies (below 1000 Hz) and not useful in amplifying the frequencies related to the human voice.

Inspiration from a surprising source

The doctor's inspiration to defeat the powers-that-be that kept inexpensive hearing aids out of the hands of the public actually came from a new cell phone he had just purchased. **"I felt**

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that if someone could devise an affordable device like an iPhone® for about \$200 that could do all sorts of things, I could create a hearing aid at a similar price."

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The high cost of hearing aids is a result of layers of middlemen and expensive unnecessary features. Dr. Cherukuri concluded that it would be possible to develop a medical grade hearing aid without sacrificing the quality of components. The result is the MDHearingAid PRO®, starting well under \$200. **It has been declared to be the best low-cost hearing aid that amplifies the range of sounds associated with the human voice without overly amplifying background noise.**

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*"I have a \$2,000 Resound Live hearing aid in my left ear and the MDHearingAid PRO® in the right ear. **I am not able to notice a significant difference in sound quality between the two hearing aids.**" —Dr. May, ENT Physician*

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COAST GUARD

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Roland L. Gardner, Dept. of Idaho. Dept. Cmdr. 1993-1994, and Nat'l Foreign Relations Cncl. Vice Chmn. 1990-1993 and 1994-1998.
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William "Bill" P. Seemann, Dept. of Florida. Dept. Cmdr. 1997-1998, Nat'l Constitution & By-Laws Cmte. Consultant 1999-2000 and Nat'l Foreign Relations Cncl. Vice Chmn. 1996-1997.
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If at first you don't succeed, appoint a committee to worry about it.

I LEARNED in school that ignorance of the law is no excuse. Unfortunately, that also applies to history, geography and math.

TODAY'S GANGSTER MOVIES are self-defeating. It's hard to say crime doesn't pay when it costs \$9.50 a pop to see it.

DID YOU HEAR about the podiatrist who ran for mayor? He was defeated.

A DOCTOR asked his patient about his activity level and how he spent a typical day.

"Well, doctor," the patient said, "yesterday I took a five-hour walk through four miles of rough terrain. I waded along the edge of a lake, got sand in my shoes, climbed several rocky hills and nearly stepped on a snake."

"You must be a heck of an outdoorsman."

"No. I'm just a heck of a bad golfer."

WHAT DID THE BABY LIGHT BULB say to its mother? "I wuv you watts and watts."

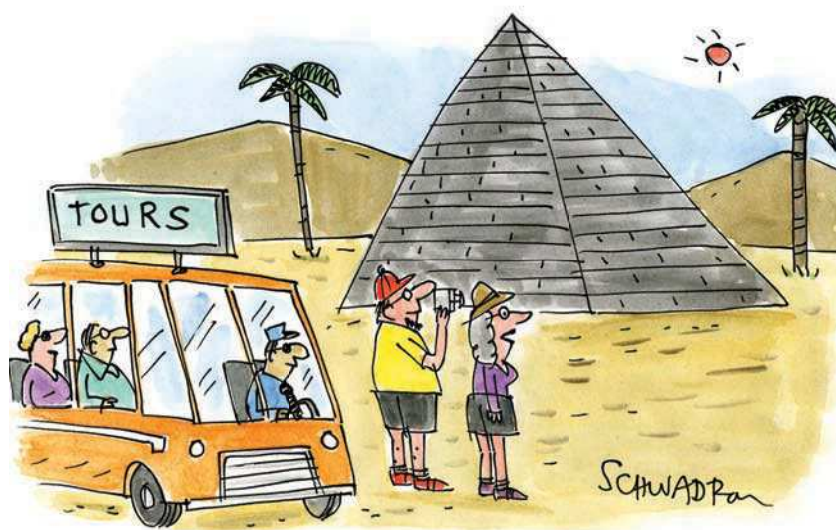
TWO OLD ACQUAINTANCES reminisced about the last time they saw each other.

"Whatever happened to that gorgeous girl you were dating?" one asked.

"Everything was going great until we went to my family reunion," the other replied.

"What happened?"

"She met my rich uncle. Now she's my aunt."



"Talk about government waste!
A tombstone would have been sufficient."



"Kathy, if you agree to these terms of service, click 'I do.'"

KNOWLEDGE is knowing a tomato is a fruit.
Wisdom is not putting it in a fruit salad.

MY BROTHER is so conceited that he sent our parents a congratulations card on his last birthday.

A LITTLE GIRL returned from summer camp, and while helping her unpack, her mother noticed a silver medal in her suitcase.

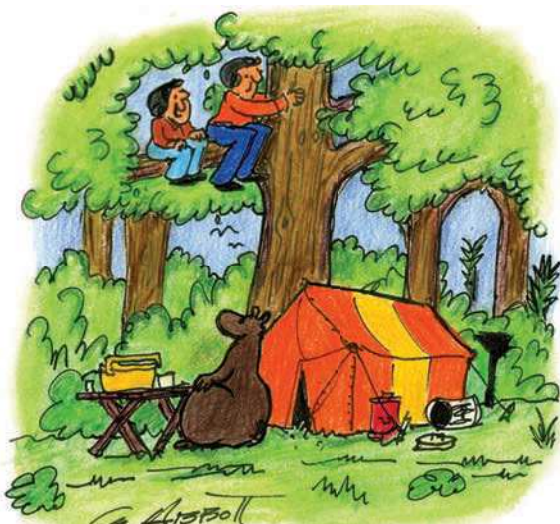
"What did you earn this for, dear?" she asked.

"For telling knock-knock jokes," the girl replied.

"And this?" Her mother held up a gold medal.

"For stopping."

"IT WAS PROPOSED this week that members of Congress use video conferencing and other remote technology to work from their home states instead of Washington. They figure they can get just as much 'not done' at home as they get 'not done' in Washington." – Jay Leno



"Boy, this is *really* quality time, isn't it, Dad?"

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Turner W. Branch, a principal and senior partner of the Branch Law Firm, retired as a 1st Lieutenant in the United States Marine Corps in 1968. He served on active duty in Camp Pendleton, California and at the Marine Corps Air Facility (MCAF) in Santa Ana, California. While at Camp Pendleton he served with the Second Battalion, Fifth Marines, First Marine Division (FMF) USMC.

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